THE FLAG OF OUR UNION.

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THE IRON CROSS:

—OR,—

THE COUNTESS OF ERROL.

A Tale of High and Low Life.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORPHANS.

The white garb of winter lay upon the earth, and the chill blast howled mournfully over the bleak hills, and through the drear vales. Deep and drifting lay the snow, and travellers found no comfort now upon the road. Blessed were those who owned comfortable houses, or had kind and able friends, for many a weary son and daughter of earth found only suffering through the long, dread winter. Some, perchance, found joy in faith; some lived in hope, while others were blessed in charity. Did not God mean that one of winter's uses should be to try these three elements of Christianity? Who so low in poverty that he may not have faith in the great God? Who so miserable that he may not find hope in his Son? But above all—who so abject in self that he will not give from out his abundance in charity?

But few of the fortunate ones were willing to search after poverty for its relief during such a winter, and those who could not go forth to beg too often suffered while there was plenty all about them.

Upon the edge of a small village, not far from the great city stood a low, dilapidated cottage. Its very outward appearance bespoke poverty and neglect, and yet everything was clean and neat where the simple care of weak hands could make it so. In the front room of the lower part was collected all the furniture of the house. There were a cot-bed and a small truckle-bed, a pine table, four well-worn chairs, and a few other simple articles. An old box-stove stood upon the hearth, from which ran a short piece of funnel directly through the fire-board.

Upon the cot bed lay a woman somewhere in the middle walks of life. She slept now, but her breathing was quick and heavy, and at times she would start as though her breath had failed her. Her pale, thin face, with its hectic flush and marble look, told plainly that consumption was upon her with its desroying power; and that fatal touch must have been laid upon her a long while since, for now there is but little flesh to cumber her soul, and but little life to bind it to earth.

Upon the truckle-bed lay a child—a girl—not more than four years old. She slept sweetly, and yet the tone of her countenance was sad. But she was a lovely-looking being—a sweet, gentle creature—and as she now lay, with her small hands clasped upon her bosom, and her sunny curls floating over her neck and shoulders, she seemed almost an angel-spirit sent to guide the soul that was so soon to depart.

Upon a low stool at the head of the truckle-bed, and also near the head of the cot, sat a boy who might have seen six summers. In feature he resembled the girl who slept near him; but his face seemed more thoughtful, and his brow wore more of sorrow. As he now sat, his head was resting upon the edge of the table, and his lids were closed. He slept, but not soundly, for at the least noise he would start quickly up, gaze anxiously upon the face of her who rested on the cot, and then close his eyes again. His hands were clasped upon his knees, and as the beams of the small lamp fell upon his face they were reflected back from two big teardrops which stood upon his cheeks.

It was very near morning, for already there were gray streaks in the east, and the stars began to grow pale. Suddenly the boy started up and gazed about him for a moment, and then he went to the window and looked out. A cold shudder crept through his frame as he felt the frosty air that made its way through imperceptible crevices, and with a low moan he turned away and glided noiselessly to the bed. But the woman slept, and he next moved toward the stove. The fire had burned very low, and instinctively he reached over into an old box which stood close at hand, but he found nothing there. Another moan broke from his lips, and another tear started down his pale cheek. A moment he stood thus, and then he clasped his hands, and raised his eyes toward heaven. No audible sound escaped his lips, but his speaking features told plainly that there was a prayer in his soul. After this he glided to the side of the truckle-bed and kneeled down.

"Clara," he whispered, at the same time touching the little sleeper upon the shoulder, "come, you must wake up for a little while."

The girl opened her eyes with a start.

"—sh!" the boy whispered. "I must go and find some wood, so do you watch mother while I'm gone. You wont fall asleep, will you?"

"No, I wont, certainly."

After this the boy put on his cap and went out. He was gone some ten or fifteen minutes, and when he returned he bore in his arms a bundle of sticks, chips and pieces of bark. With some of this he set the fire burning once more, and then he called for the little girl to come and sit down by the stove. The boy went again to look upon the sleeper, and then came and sat down by his sister's side.

"Henry," spoke the girl, in a low, prattling whisper, "can mamma ever be well again?"

"I don't know, Clara; I hope she can."

"So do I," resumed the girl, with a sad look, "for what shall you and I do when she is gone away from us?"

For some moments the boy was silent. A painful expression rested upon his features, and his lips trembled.

"Perhaps," he at length said, but with a doubting tone, "we may find friends. You know they have helped mother. Some good folks have sent the doctor here, and have sent us things to eat, too; and why shouldn't they be good to us if we should be left alone?"

"They ought to, hadn't they?" the girl replied, earnestly and confidingly. "Why," she added, with increased confidence, "of course they will help us, and protect us."

"But why of course?"

"Why, because there are so many folks who go to meeting, and belong to the church. You know what mama has told us made a Christian, and surely these folks who live here are Christians; and so they must help us. All of them have Bibles, and you know what the Bible says about such things."

The boy made no answer, for he had not all his sister's simple confidence. She had not been out into the little world about them, and he had. She had never asked charity of a professing Christian, but the boy had. He had seen and heard enough to know that all was not Christianity which was called so, and that all were not Christians who would be known as such.

But before anything more was said, there was a movement upon the bed, and the boy hastened to its side. The sleeper had awakened, but it was some time before she seemed to realize that the boy was near her.

"Dear mother, do you feel much pain now?"

"No, Henry, none at all," the woman replied, seeming to open her eyes with an effort.

"Then you are better?" the boy cried, hopefully.

"Yes, and I shall soon be wholly well."

Little Clara heard these words, and with a joyful utterance she started towards the bedside.

"Mama will get well," she said, taking the invalid's hand and kissing it.

The sick woman placed her arm about the neck of the affectionate child, and drew it upon her bosom.

"Yes, Clara," she replied, in a low, husky tone, "I shall soon be well, but not here in this world—not here, my children. You have heard me read in the Bible of that place where 'the weary are at rest,' and where there is no more pain, nor sorrow, nor suffering. I am going there soon. I shall be happy there. And do you know why I shall be happy?"

"Because you have been so good here," quickly answered the boy.

"That is one reason," said the mother, "but there is another, and one full as important. Do you remember that I have told you that when I went to heaven I should look down upon you, and bless you if I could?"

"Yes," answered both the little ones.

"Then how do you suppose I should feel, if I should look down upon you and find you naughty and wicked, just as some of the children are whom you have seen in the streets?"

"O, but we never shall be so," uttered Henry; and Clara joined in the assurance.

"Then I shall be very happy. And let me tell you this once more, my children: When I am gone, I hope you will remember that your mother may be looking down upon you, and witnessing everything you do. Never forget this, for it will be a help to you through life."

"But you aren't going to leave us now, mother," the boy said, as the idea seemed to present itself before all others.

The sick woman closed her eyes, and for some moments she was silent. That loud, painful breathing which had marked her disease for a long while was gone, and now she breathed lowly and without much apparent effort. Henry did not notice how weak and low her voice was, for he thought she only whispered because she chose so to do.

"Mother," he at length said, "do you not want something?"

"No, my dear boy," she replied, re-opening her eyes.

"But shan't I warm some of your gruel? Mrs. Bascom will come before long, but I can warm it as well as she can."

This Mrs. Bascom was a neighbor who had been hired by the physician to nurse the sick woman, and sometimes, when her patient seemed easy, she was in the habit of spending the night at her own home, leaving the boy to watch.

"What time is it?" the woman asked, turning her head with difficulty towards the window, over which hung a curtain of blue paper.

"I should think the sun rose just as you waked up," was the boy's answer.

"Then Mrs. Bascom will be here before long." And again the invalid closed her eyes. This time she remained silent longer than before, and at length the children, thinking that their mother had fallen asleep, turned away from the bed, but ere they had reached the stove they were called back. Henry was startled when he saw the change which had come over her face, for he could not but notice it.

"Henry—Clara—my children," she said, "I feel very strangely. I shall not be with you much longer."

"Let me go and call Mrs. Bascom," cried the boy.

"No," returned the woman, "for then you might not hear me speak my last words. No power on earth can help me. The Lord has called me, and I must go."

The sick woman's voice grew more weak and husky, and her eyes began to lose their lustre.

"Henry," she said, after an interval of silence, "go to my little bureau in the other room, and in the upper drawer you will find a small, wooden box. Bring it to me."

The boy turned away and went into a little bedroom where there was no article of furniture save the pine bureau in question. He found the box and carried it to the bedside. The woman took it, but she had not the strength to open it. It was only fastened by a little hook. She gave it back to Henry and asked him to raise the lid. He did so, and within he found only a small paper parcel. This he took out and opened, and he soon came to a small *iron cross*, or crucifix. It was a simple thing, not more than two inches in length, and though it had once been brightly polished, it was now dimmed, and in spots it had begun to rust. At the top was a steel ring through which was run a piece of faded blue ribbon.

"What have you found?" asked the sick woman, painfully, and with much effort.

"A little iron cross," answered the boy.

"Let me have it."

Henry placed it in her hand, but she could not raise it up so as to look upon it. Yet she worked it in her fingers as though she would make sure 'twas the article she meant, and then she bade Henry take it again.

"My children," she said, "this is a simple thing, but 'tis all I have to leave you by which to remember your mother—all of outward circumstance, I mean. But even this has much significance. When you look upon it, you will remember two faithful friends—your Saviour and your mother. O, you will not forget the lessons of good you have learned. Henry, you are older than Clara, and to her you must be faithful and kind."

"Surely I will, my mother," returned the boy, while the big tears began to gather in his eyes.

"I know you will. Clara."

The little girl started forward and placed her tiny hands upon her mother's arm.

"That cross is as much yours as it is Henry's. You will keep it sometimes—but be sure that you do not lose it. It is—"

The speaker's voice failed her for the while, and the unfinished sentence ended in a low gasp. At length, however, she opened her eyes again, and while the shade grew deeper upon her face, she murmured:

"Keep it, and when you look upon it remember your God, and your Christ, and your mother. Kiss me—"

With convulsive movements both the children sprang forward and kissed the dying woman's pale cheeks, and with the last effort of expiring strength she clasped them to her bosom.

"You will not forget me—you will always be good—and you will never—"

Her voice failed her, and her arms sank by her side. A few moments she remained thus, and then, with a sort of natural, instinctive movement she raised both hands to her bosom and crossed them there. Her eyes were opened wide, and her gaze was fixed upon a point where a sunbeam, which stole through a small hole in the curtain, rested upon the wall. Her breathing was now heavy and seemingly painful, the gasps coming at regular intervals, and quite loud.

"Mother," whispered Henry, reaching over so as to lay his hand upon her arm. "Mother—wont you speak to us some more? Shan't I run for the doctor?—mother—mother!"

But she did not answer, nor did she show by a single motion that she heard. Her eyes were still open wide, and fixed upon the sunbeam, and ever and anon her bosom would rise and fall as the heavy gasps came at intervals which grew longer and longer. Again and again did the boy call for his mother to speak to him, but she heard him not.

"Why don't she speak?" asked the little girl, with more of wonder than of fear.

"Perhaps she cannot, Clara."

"Then we must give her some medicine."

"—sh!" uttered Henry, raising his hand towards his sister. The gasps of the dying woman had become so long, and so far between, that at each one her breath seemed gone. After the boy uttered his admonition to his little companion, there came one more gasp, and it was longer and more spasmodic than the others. Then the bosom sank into quiet, a strange shade passed over the face, and the light of the eye went out. Long and anxiously did the children wait for another breath, but it came not. The thin lips had turned ashy, and the eyes were now leaden in their hue.

"What ails her?" whispered Clara.

"*She's dead!*" answered Henry, convulsively. He had never seen death before, though he had a faint recollection of seeing a dead father, yet he knew that it was death which he saw now. A few moments after he had answered his sister he remained silent, but his emotions soon gained utterance, and with one deep groan of anguish he threw himself upon the bed and burst into tears.

Half an hour afterwards some of those who lived near, saw that there was no smoke from the chimney of the humble cot, and they hastened in. They found the room cold and dark, the fire having all gone out. Upon the bed they found the poor widow dead and still, while at her feet lay the two children, clasped in each other's arms, sobbing as though their hearts were breaking.

"Poor Nancy Wallace!" uttered one of the visitors, placing the corner of her apron to her eyes. "She's at rest now!"

"God knows she has suffered enough," added another, "and may he be merciful to her now!"

* * * * *

Two weeks had passed away, and the widow had been buried. A few friends—members of a female benevolent society, placed a simple stone at the head of her grave, upon which was chiselled the name—"Nancy Wallace."

Henry Wallace knew that some one had sent the doctor to attend his mother, but not until after she was dead did he know that the officers of the town had done this. Just two weeks after the death of Mrs. Wallace, did the children find a home beneath the roof of a neighbor, and at the end of that time, some men came and took them away in a wagon, and carried them to a great brick house which stood at the other end of the town. It was the *poor house*, but they were too young to know then all the evils that cling to the place. People were kind to them, and they were grateful, for they were only children.

CHAPTER II.

THE MURDER. THE MINIATURE.

From the country village we go to the great city, and in the passage we pass over sixteen years. Great changes have taken place during that time. Men have become old and feeble; towns and cities have altered; thousands of animate things have passed away into the valley of death; thousands have been ushered upon the stage of life, while young children have become men and maidens.

Near one of the principal thoroughfares of the great city, in a small, clean court, was located the office of Isaiah Beckwith, Esq. Mr. Beckwith was a lawyer of considerable eminence, whose head was frosted by the touch of time, and whose mind was stored and enriched with the experience of many years, threescore of which had at least passed over his head. It was well into the evening, but the old lawyer was still in his office, for he had business of importance on hand. He was not a very tall man, but yet tall enough. He had a broad, full chest, displaying much vital power, and the color and clearness of his skin showed that his life had been a temperate one, both in eating and drinking. There were none of those hard, harsh lines about his features which most people are apt to look for upon a lawyer's face, but his countenance was the index to a noble soul, and a kind, generous disposition.

At a desk in one corner of the office sat a young man engaged in writing. He was not over two and twenty years of age, and though his face bore all the beauty and clearness of youth, yet his frame was stout and full. He was not very tall, but he was plump and round in limb, and of such proportions as best suit the true idea of manhood. His hair was of a brown hue, rich and glossy, and his eye of a lustrous gray. He wrote very rapidly, seeming to be engaged in copying. At length he stopped, closed his book, and having carefully wiped his pen he placed it in a small rack for that purpose.

"How now, Henry?" spoke the old man, as he noticed his clerk's motions. "Aren't you going to finish to-night?"

"All done, sir," replied the youth, with some pride in his tone.

"Do you mean that you have copied all the instruments I gave you?"

"Yes, sir."

The old man went around and opened the book which the youth had just closed. He found the instruments not only all copied, but done in a bold, full, plain, and handsome hand.

"Henry Wallace, you are more than a common man," spoke Isaiah Beckwith, with enthusiasm. "How do you contrive to do so much?"

"Industry, sir, is the main secret; though I suppose perseverance has brought me the ability."

"You are right, Henry—you are right. And now let me tell you that you must not hide your talents from the world longer. You must mingle more in society."

"Not yet, sir, not yet," said the youth, with a strange expression.

"But you've got to do it at some time, and why not commence now?"

"As soon as I am admitted to the bar it will be time enough for me to seek company. I have no desire to seek it now."

"But why not? Now, Henry, I want you to be frank with me. Here you have been with me over three years, a smart, active, intelligent, handsome youth. Don't hang down your head, for you know I speak the truth. Here you have been all this while, and yet you will not mingle at all in society. Now why is it?"

Henry Wallace stood for some time in silence, but at length he spoke, and in a tone of frankness which gave the note of truth to all he said:

"Mr. Beckwith, I do not wonder, when I think of it, that my conduct appears strange, but you shall know the whole truth, and then you will wonder no more. Of my father, sir, I can remember nothing, save a faint idea of having seen his cold, stiff corse, which idea clung to my memory through fear and fright. When I was five years old my mother was taken sick, and for a whole year she was confined to her bed most of the time. We were very poor, more so than I was then able to conceive of. One cold, bleak morning in mid-winter my mother died. My sister and I stood by her bedside and saw her die, and then we sank down and wept. A friend took us home, but we did not stay there long. We were sent to the—*poor house!*"

The youth stopped here and bowed his head, for painful recollections came crowding upon him. At length he continued:

"In that poor-house we—my sister and myself—remained seven years, and during that time I suffered everything of reproach, slander and contumely. I and sister commenced to go to school, but we were taunted by the favored children of fortune, because we were inmates of the alms house, and we had to leave school. But our mother had made us promise that we would study when we had a chance, so Clara and I studied our books at home, and an old man who had once been a lawyer helped us. When I

Jester's Picnic.

can't endure such rudeness any
here, my son; we'll see if the
tion' wont drive it from you."
mind the licking, pa; but I'm
t do me any good."
tell better about that afterwards.
ou think so, John?"
esn't the arichmetic say that forty
e rood (rods)?"
u are an incorrigible lad. Turn
we'll see how much it takes to make
r)."
, pa; please don't. I guess it will
(a furlong)."—*New Haven Reg.*

ory is told of a broad-backed Kentuckian
went to New Orleans for the first
key, brandy and plain drinks, he
s so compounded and flavored that
s a Know Nothing. Reposing on
the Court of the St. Charles, he observed
e of fashionables drinking mint juleps
," said he, "bring me a glass of
." When he had consumed the
ht, he called the boy. "Boy, what
emark?" "Why, you ordered a
that's right, don't forget it; *keep*

r of "Habits and Men" relates an
n old fashioned naval captain, who
o offence of dancing without gloves.
ero in question had stood up to go
ntry-dance with a very fine lady,
ked to observe that his huge and
were not covered, according to etiquette,
aptain," said his fair partner, "you
not aware that you have not got
n?" "O, never mind, ma'am!"
commander, "never mind; I can
ds when we've done!"

ce in it.—Mr. Patrick O'Shaughnessy's faith in vaccination.
y youngest gossoon to the docther
med the cruel operation."
t came of it, Pat?"
s, the boy died two days afther."
ays I?"
orra! he fell from an apple tree that
to to gather pertaties, and broke his
e divil wid yer vaccination!"

re schoolmaster, who was one of the
stamp, taking down a young "wiseacre"
"Dotheboys Hall," stopped for refreshment
a village inn. "Boil me an egg,"
d give the broth to the boy." "But
urishment in the water an egg has
n," said the publican. "Very well,
l the liberal pedagogue; "boil me
, for I'm confoundedly hungry."

dly by a "celebrated Roman Consul,"
Mr. G. P. R. James's "solitary
was warming his boots at a village
a very cold night, a waiting maid
"Sir, if you don't look out, you'll
urs." "You mean my boots, my
o, sir," was the consoling reply;
urned already."

comic actor, once attempted to
HL, and was deservedly hissed.
ght he played Crack, the drunken
e Turnpike Gate, and was deserved-
ed. "I can tell you the reason of
and of your success," said Theodore
"You play the royal tyrant like a
the cobbler royally."

V. was one day bantering the Duke
on his excessive corpulence, in the
the Duke D'Aumont, who was just
d told him that he did not take exercise.
"You are mistaken, sire," said
"there isn't a day that I don't
st three times round my cousin

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was thirteen years old, a man came to the poor-house to see if he could find a good boy to take and bring up. He saw me, and liked my looks, and asked me if I would like to go with him? I told him I should, if he would take my sister, too. 'But,' said I to him, 'if they send me with you without my sister, you must not place any confidence in me, for I promise you most faithfully that I shall run away on the first opportunity.' He seemed rather pleased at this, and finally agreed to take Clara with me. That man was Adam Wagner, and, as you already know, he proved a true friend to me. With him I lived six years, and during all that time both Clara and myself had free access to his library. When he and his family got ready to sail for Europe, he sent me to you and obtained for Clara the place she has since held."

"And this is the history of your life?" said the old man, with a beaming look.

"Yes, sir, in outline."

"And what is there here to debar you from mingling in society, I should like to know? Why, solemnly, Henry, I shall respect you now more than ever."

"Will you, sir?" uttered the youth, while a moisture gathered in his eyes.

"Most surely I shall. But you have not answered my question yet?"

"I can answer it in a very few words, sir. There are young men here in the city—some of them just commenced in law—who know the history of my early life, and already I have had the finger of scorn pointed at me, and the taunt of the *poor house* thrown out. Should I mix with society, I should be inevitably thrown into company with these very men."

"And what care you for them, Henry?"

"Nothing now, sir; but 'twould gall me to have that taunt flung at me in public."

"But sensible men would not join in it or notice it."

"Perhaps you are right there; but after all, what am I to gain by subjecting myself to be brought in the way of the dirty stuff? I am not yet old enough to associate with the solid men of the city, and as for the mass of the young men whom I have seen, I care but little for them, sincerely believing that I am better off as it is."

"Upon the whole, Henry, I don't know but that you are right," said the old man, frankly. "But I wish to ask you one more question: How is your sister satisfied with her present position?"

"Ah, sir," answered the young man, sadly, "she does not like it at all. Mr. Loman is proud and overbearing, and his eldest daughter is worse still. She has her patience and temper most sorely tried there."

"So I feared," said Beckwith. "I know John Loman well, and I feared that Clara would not be happy there. I wish, for your sake as well as hers, that I had a family. We should make quite a happy household."

"You have been alone many years, sir?" said Henry, interrogatively.

"Mostly alone for twenty years. My wife died just twenty years ago, and my son has been away most of the time since. But we have both of us more cause for joy than for sorrow, and surely more cause for hope than for repining. I am approaching the evening of my days with a clear conscience, and to you life is opening a fair field of promise. Go on, my son—go on as you have begun, and good men shall bless you, and heal their children be like you."

The old man extended his hand as he spoke, and the youth grasped it with a fervent grip. Shortly afterwards they separated for the night, the lawyer going towards his hotel, and the youthful student and clerk taking his way towards the quarter where stood his no less respectable, but more humble, boarding-house.

It was late in the evening, and very dark, and a chilly March wind was howling through the streets and about the sharp angles of the buildings. Henry's nearest way to his boarding-place was through a narrow alley which crossed no less than five streets in its course. This way was by no means a pleasant one after dark, but the youth knew nothing of fear, and he took it on the present occasion. He had passed half through the alley when his attention was arrested by the sound of deep groaning not far off. He stopped a moment, and found that the sound proceeded from some point ahead, and on he pushed with quick steps, feeling sure that some fellow being was in distress. In a few moments he reached a place where an old smithy had been burned down only a month before, and just as he stepped he saw a watchman approaching from the opposite direction with a lantern.

The rays of light from this lantern shot into the black, charred space where the smithy had stood, and as Henry instinctively cast his eyes that way, he saw two men—one of them prostrate, and the other bending over him with a knife in his hand. This view was but for an instant, for no sooner did the light of the watchman's lantern shine into the place than the assassin leaped to his feet. Henry saw that his face was black, and on the next instant he leaped upon him, but the villain was quick, and eluded our hero's blow. Henry's next movement was to make a grasp at him—he aimed to seize him by the arms, but the fellow leaped quickly aside, and the youth's grasp was of but little effect, one hand having clutched the whisker upon his black cheek, and the other his vest. As the scamp tore away, Henry felt something in each hand, but in his haste of pursuit he thrust the articles into his pocket and then joined the watchman.

Had this latter individual been half as eager and active as was Henry Wallace the villain might not easily have been captured, but he had only held up his lantern and looked on until the bird had fairly flown, and then he woke the night air with his howlings for assistance.

It was soon evident to Henry that the murderer was gone for the present, and he turned back towards the spot where the affray had taken place. He found some dozen people collected there, two of whom were watchmen. Upon the ground, or rather upon a heap of coal and ashes, lay a well-dressed man, from a wound in whose breast the warm blood was yet oozing. He was dead, and had evidently been robbed, for a large pocket book lay open by his side marked all over with finger-prints of blood. Henry waited until he was assured that no one present knew the victim, and then he went his way without hinting at the part he had acted upon the premises. He had no desire to run the risk of having a policeman or watchman lug him off to the lock-up, and keep him there for a witness, though he intended to come forward if he should find any need for it.

When the youth reached his boarding-house he took a lamp and went at once to his room, and when once there, his first movement was to look at the prizes he had captured. The first was a gold watch-seal, very beautifully carved, representing a couchant lion upon a richly chased gold table, beneath which was set a very large blood cornelian. This stone bore a signet, which appeared to have the initials "J. C." After a little further examination, Henry found that the cornelian was shut down with a clasp, and on opening it he found one of the most exquisite miniatures he had ever seen. It was of a young female, and evidently painted on ivory.

The next prize was not quite so inviting, yet Henry thought it worth keeping. It was simply a bunch of crisp, curly hair, but even this had something curious about it, for it was of such a texture as never grew on a man's face, being nothing more nor less, than such hair as is used for stuffing cushions, mattresses, etc. Nor was this all. The bunch, or tuft, was attached to a piece of black silk some two inches long, and torn in a rectangular shape about an inch wide.

For a long while the youth sat and gazed upon the miniature he had thus strangely found. It was the transcript of one of the most lovely faces he had ever seen. The features were faultlessly regular, and sweet in tone, while a smile almost heavenly seemed to rest upon them. The hair, which was of a rich brown, hung in clustering ringlets, and the open, fair brow, was all sunshine and truth. The face was surely that of a young female, but yet not young enough for a girl. Henry Wallace became almost fascinated by that face, and it was not until the clock struck the hour of midnight that he laid it aside. The hair he folded carefully up in a paper, and then placed it in his trunk, for he knew enough of law to know how important such things sometimes are. But the seal he could not give up yet. He laid it upon his dressing-case, and finally, when he had got into bed, he placed it beneath his pillow.

That night he had any quantity of dreams to visit him, but foremost of them all were those in which the sweet face of the miniature held a prominent place. The last dream sent an angel to lead him away to heaven. The angel wore the face of the picture that lay beneath his pillow, only she looked more sad than smiling, and when the youth questioned her authority for taking him away she fell to weeping. At this he sprang forward to catch her in his arms and kiss away her tears, and—he awoke. The sun was shining brightly into his window, and the bell was just ringing for breakfast.

CHAPTER III.

ROSAMOND.

When Henry reached the office he found a fire already built, and the floor swept. The boy tried to grumble some at being kept so long from his breakfast, but the smiles and kind explanation of the young student quickly disarmed him of all bad feelings, and he finally said, to himself, that 'twas "some comfort to wait for a gentleman who knew sunth'n." Very few lawyer's clerks and students would have stooped to ask the pardon of a poor office-boy, but Henry did it, and he made a friend by it.

As soon as the boy was gone the youth took the morning paper, and ere long he found a flaming account of the "*murder*" of the night before. In addition to what Henry already knew he learned from this account that the body of the murdered man had been taken to one of the station-houses, and there recognized as a noted gamester and jockey. It was supposed that he had been followed from some gaming-house, perhaps by a man who had lost to him, and then robbed. At first Henry thought of informing Mr. Beckwith of what he had seen, but upon more mature deliberation he resolved to keep the whole affair to himself, at least until he could see some need of his moving in the matter.

Perhaps one reason for this chosen course was a wish to keep the seal and miniature which had so strangely come into his possession. At any rate he had no desire to give it up, though he would not have kept it a moment had he reason to believe that the ends of justice would be more quickly answered by his giving it up. He reasoned with himself in this fashion:

"If I give this seal up there will be some noise, or at least, publicity given it, and then the owner will keep shy and dark. But if I keep it, I may find the original of the miniature, and thus, in time, perhaps trap the murderer. I will keep my eyes open, and I may yet solve the mystery."

It was near the middle of the forenoon when Mr. Beckwith entered the office, and he seemed to have been at work hard.

"Henry," he said, about an hour afterwards, "I have learned some news this morning, and I make you acquainted with it now so that you may not learn of it accidentally, and then go and tell of it. Mr. Loman is on the brink of bankruptcy."

"Do you mean John Loman?" asked the youth, with much surprise.

"Yes. The man in whose family your sister resides."

"But I thought him worth three hundred thousand at least?"

"So do most of his friends. But some of his creditors have called upon me this morning, and we find that he has been in the hands of the Jews for some time. For the last two months he has paid over twenty thousand dollars in interest on short accommodations."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes—but the crash has not come yet. He is not quite gone, and may, with his present means, stagger along for a month more. At the end of that time," added the old lawyer, with a smile, "he may find a bridge that will carry him safely over. He is now hunting after a rich widow!"

"And who knows but that he may find one?" said Henry, with a light laugh. "He could afford to put up with quite an elderly one, and if I mistake not, there are some wealthy old dowagers in our city."

"Certainly; and that is the reason why we would keep his precarious situation a secret. If he manages to find a wealthy wife he may save himself, whereas, were his real position known, such a woman might not have him. I know it is not a very honorable thing to help shield such men, but the society of our city in which he moves is made up of what we might term *life-gamesters*. You can hardly find one of them who is not ready at any moment to gamble away real peace and honor for glitter and show. The clink of gold is of more account than the voice of prayer, and the gleaming of paltry jewels is of more worth than the pure light of modesty and virtue. Mr. Loman is a man of the world, and can he find a wealthy dowager who wants to make a little more show in fashionable life, his domestic habits will afford her an excellent opportunity."

Henry promised that he would say nothing in public of Loman's affairs, and then he resumed his business. When evening came the youth ate his supper at a restaurant, and then took his way towards the fashionable part of the city for the purpose of visiting his sister.

John Loman's house was one of those magnificent structures which great wealth affords, and stood in the very centre of the haunts of the aristocracy. When Henry reached it he entered the court and rang at one of the wing doors. His summons was answered by a foot-boy, of whom he inquired for Miss Wallace. Clara was soon at the door, and in a moment more the brother and sister were locked in each other's arms.

The poor orphan girl had grown to be a most beautiful maiden. In form she was slightly below a medium stature, but her frame was rounded to such exquisite proportions that no sculptor could have wished to make an addition to it. Those ringlets which in childhood were of a sunny hue, were now changed to a rich, bright brown, and the full, clear eye was of that deep, sparkling gray which marks the intellectual, strong-minded woman. Henry Wallace was proud of his sister, and in his opinion there was but one other girl in the city so beautiful, and that other one was a dweller beneath the same roof with his sister.

Clara led her brother to a little sitting-room which she was privileged to use, and here they sat down and talked over the things and scenes of by-gone days. At length Henry approached a subject nearer to the present.

"Clara," he said, with some hesitation, "I want you to tell me the truth now. Are you contented in your present situation?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Because Mr. Beckwith can get you a good place if we wish."

"I don't think I would change now, Henry, for I am satisfied that these wealthy families are all alike, or nearly so. There are some sources of vexation, and some of pleasure, in them all."

"But do you find any source of pleasure here, my sister?"

"O, yes, I do now. Mr. Loman is sometimes disagreeable, and Arabella, his oldest daughter, is harsh, haughty, and overbearing; but Rosamond Loman is almost an angel. She loves me now, I know, and I love her. Even the clouds which Arabella's unkindness casts over my path are made all sunshine by Rosamond's goodness and sweet companionship."

The rich blood mounted to Henry's brow as his sister thus spoke, but he tried to overcome the emotion. He had seen Rosamond Loman, and she was the one whom he thought a rival, almost, for his sister in beauty.

"Does she spend much time with you?" the youth at length asked.

"O, yes, a great deal. She would have spent the whole of this evening with me if you had not come. Her father and sister have gone to a party, and will be away until very late."

Just as Clara thus spoke an Irish girl looked into the room, and informed her that Miss Rosamond wanted her.

"I will be back in a moment," the girl said, as she arose to leave her brother.

"Stop a moment," rejoined Henry. "If Miss Loman would like your company this evening, I will take my leave at once, and call again when her sister is at home."

"No, no, my brother. I cannot spare you."

Clara kissed him on the cheek as she spoke, and then left the room. She was gone some ten minutes, and when she returned there was a strange smile upon her face.

"Henry," she said, "Miss Loman sends her compliments, and wishes to know if you will not allow me to keep her company this evening by honoring her with your own."

The young man started half up, and then sank back again.

"She—she—only said that as a gentle hint for me to leave," he uttered, tremulously.

"You are mistaken, I assure you. She does really wish you to come with me."

"No, no—you can go alone," said Henry, still trembling.

"But she will not receive me alone. She bade me, if you did not wish to come, to remain with you."

"Then I will—will—"

"You will go," interrupted Clara, with a meaning smile. "So come."

Henry Wallace arose and followed his sister from the room, and on his way through the hall he muttered to himself concerning the folly of being so affected. He denominated himself "a fool" for thinking of such a thing as emotion in connection with Rosamond Loman; and by the time he reached the drawing-room he had become very calm. When he entered the apartment where the young lady sat, he found it lighted by two brilliant jets of gas, which were softened by globes of ground glass. Rosamond arose as he entered, and his sister introduced him. They had seen each other several times before, but never to speak.

Rosamond Loman was no taller than Clara, but she was more plump in form, and seemed more happy and smiling. In fact, her sunny, dimpled face was fashioned for smiles, and a look or thought of evil feeling seemed never to have made an impress there. Her hair was of a sunny, golden auburn, and her laughter loving eyes of a deep blue.

And yet a nobler-looking man than Henry Wallace never entered that drawing-room, and Clara, as she gazed upon him, felt more pride in her brother than she would have dared to confess. His dark, brown hair gathered in small curls about one of the fairest brows that ever marked the intellectual man, and his waking smile led the thoughts to a soul as free from guile as an infant's.

For awhile the conversation was lame and profitless, for both Henry and the young hostess were embarrassed and troubled; but ere long the ice was broken, and their tongues moved with more freedom. Rosamond asked Clara to take a seat at the piano. While in the family of Mr. Wagner both the orphans had devoted much of their spare time to music, their kind master giving them every facility in his power, and hence when Clara left his roof she was well qualified to teach music. She seated herself at the piano without any excuse, and asked her young mistress what she should play.

"Play and sing me something," replied Rosamond.

"Then my brother must help me," returned Clara.

"Do you sing?" quickly asked Rosamond, turning to her guest.

"Sometimes," returned Henry.

"Then you must certainly accompany Clara, for I know of no music that pleases me more than the harmony of the male and female voices."

Henry bowed, and then went and stood by his sister's side. Clara selected a piece they had often sang together—a sweet, home song—and commenced it. At first the youth's voice was tremulous, but it soon became full, steady, and strong, and its melody was as rich as the notes of an organ. Clara was a sweet singer, and so much had she practised with her brother, that their voices blended with a harmony never excelled by art. Rosamond was in raptures, and for half an hour they sang to please her.

"One more," she said, at the end of that time. "Only sing me one more, and then we will converse again."

"What shall it be, sister?" asked Henry.

"Let it be 'Our Prayer.'"

"Can you sing it?" the youth added, while a shade of sadness passed over his fine features.

"Yes. I love to sing it."

"Then let it be that."

"You must play it."

Henry made no answer, but as Clara arose he took his seat at the piano. It was a noble instrument, and though Henry was not so practised a performer as his sister, yet his touch had that peculiar boldness and power which marks the true man. He played a minor prelude of most touching sympathy and exquisite sweetness, and then he commenced the song alone. He sang the first verse, addressed to his sister. Clara sang the second, addressed to him, and the rest they sang in concert. The piece was a simple prayer of two orphan hearts, and it was the life-story of their souls. When Henry turned away from the piano he found Rosamond in tears, and fairly sobbing.

"Where did you find that?" she asked, as soon as she could command her speech. "Never, never, did I hear anything so touchingly beautiful."

"It is simply the story of a poor orphan," returned Henry.

"I know," said Rosamond. "My own heart told me that, for you know I am an orphan, too. My sainted mother has heard many a prayer like that from me—like that in spirit. I must find the song."

"I will teach it to you," said Clara.

"Is it not published?"

Clara bent over and whispered in Rosamond's ear. She whispered that Henry composed both the words and the music. The young hostess regarded the youth with a look of frank admiration, and shortly afterwards she went and sat down by his side on one of the sofas.

"You have paid much attention to music, sir," she said.

"Only for my own amusement and recreation," he replied.

"But you must be fond of it?"

"I am. I think God made music to relieve the worn and wearied soul. At least, I have found much comfort in it."

"So have I. Before my mother died I loved music only when she played and sang for me. Such exercises as others performed had no music for me. Since my bereavement, I have loved true music; and, sir, permit me to say, that this evening I have heard the sweetest harmony and the deepest soul of music, that it has ever been my fortune to listen to beneath this roof."

"You flatter me, lady."

"If I do, I have at least the excuse that I speak the truth."

Henry Wallace was perfectly enchanted. There was something in the very presence of Rosamond Loman that made his heart beat quicker, but now that of her own accord she sat by his side, his emotions were almost wild. He was not only in love, but he knew it. He knew that the sweet face, and the still sweeter disposition had enchained his heart.

At length the conversation took a turn upon the various phases of society, and Henry's feelings were not a little lightened when he heard from Rosamond's own lips that she despised the empty show by which she was continually surrounded when in the society of those who usually visited at her father's house. He expressed himself freely, and in such a manner that his listeners both showed themselves more than ordinarily interested in his conversation.

Henry had just concluded an account of a peculiar law case which had lately come under his observation, when the clock upon a neighboring church commenced to strike. He listened, and he counted twelve strokes.

"What—midnight," he uttered, starting to his feet.

Rosamond arose and went beyond the Moorish arch which divided the drawing-rooms where she could look upon the marble clock.

"It is twelve o'clock!" she said.

"Pardon me," Henry resumed, in a low, tremulous tone, "I did not dream that I was encroaching upon your time in such a manner."

"I will pardon you on one condition," returned Rosamond, with a happy smile; "and that is, that you and your sister shall spend another evening with me when I am lonesome!"

"I shall come to see my sister often, lady, and I shall not refuse an evening of such pure pleasure as this has been, if it is offered me."

Henry took his leave, and instinctively Rosamond accompanied him to the door. To be sure Clara went also, for the young hostess would hardly have gone alone.

And Henry Wallace passed another night of dreams. The face of the seal was forgotten now, for he had a face as sweet engraven on his heart.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LINES TO MY LITTLE GOD-DAUGHTER.

BY TAMAR ANNE KIRMOSE.

Dear little Agnes, I must write of thee—
So fair and pure—so full of life and grace;
I fancy I can hear thy laugh ring now,
And see it light thy pretty rosy face.

The merry years of childhood are before thee—
The joyous time that fades, alas! too fast;
The days and weeks and months look bright and happy,
'Tis sad to think they cannot—will not last.

But O, as years pass on, and bring their changes,
And sorrow perhaps may cross thy fair young brow—
May God above preserve thee from all dangers,
And keep thee pure and innocent as now.

FALLS OF HANDEK.

Just over the ledge from which the water springs, a rock lies athwart the stream that passes under it, so that, as you look from below, it appears as if an immense fountain there welled forth from the centre of the vertical cliff. Mounting to the top, you see one of the most wild and singular falls in Switzerland. Upon one side, the Aar, descending in a copious yellowish mass, precipitates itself into a deep, narrow gorge of rock, that opens out to the depth of two hundred feet. At the same time, from an adjoining ledge, the Erlanbach, which flows down from an immense field of snow on the top of a mountain at the side of the valley, flings itself over in a flood of silvery drops; and the torrents mingle half-way down, while the spray rushes forth with irrepressible fury. Above the mists that contended in this dungeon of furious waters, an iris was formed; not bow shaped, and having none of the serenity of the Arch of Hope, but whirling and flickering in a blaze of blue, green, and orange; sometimes forming a solid pillar of lurid fire, and anon breaking and flashing as the spray rose and fell. It seemed like a flame from hell-mouth, bursting forth from the deep crevice, and checked, but not extinguished, by the two streams poured in to quench it.—*H. B. Wallace.*

A PARIS SUNDAY.

In Horace Greeley's last letter to the New York Tribune, he gives a long account of Paris and its sights in terms of much approbation, but is inclined to look with disfavor upon the Parisian method of observing the Sabbath. He says: "I am no formalist, and would not have Sunday kept absolutely sacred from labor and recreations with all the strictness enjoined in the Mosaic ritual; I believe the cramped and weary toiler through six days of each week may better walk or ride out with his children and breathe the fresh, pure air on Sunday, than not at all; yet this French use of the Christian Sabbath as a mere fete day, or holiday, impresses me very unfavorably. Half the stores are open on that day; men are cutting stone and doing all manner of work as on other days; the journals are published, offices open, business transacted; only there is more hilarity, more dancing, more drinking, more theatre-going, more dissipation, than on any other day of the week. I suspect that labor gets no more pay in the long run for seven days' work than it would for six, and that morality suffers, and philanthropy is more languid than it would be if one day in each week were generally welcomed as a day of rest and worship."

A MADMAN'S FREAK.

A lady was one evening sitting in her drawing room alone, when the only inmate of the house, a brother who had been betraying a tendency to unsoundness of mind, entered with a carving-knife in his hand, and shutting the door, came up to her and said: "Margaret, an odd idea has occurred to me. I wish to paint the head of John the Baptist, and I think yours might make an excellent study for it. So, if you please, I will cut off your head." The lady looked at her brother's eye, and seeing no token of a jest, concluded that he meant to do as he said. There was an open window and a balcony by her side, with a street in front, but a moment satisfied her that safety did not lie that way. So, putting on a smiling countenance, she said with the greatest apparent cordiality, "That is a strange idea, George; but would it not be a pity to spoil this pretty new lace tippet I have got? I will just step to my room to put it off, and be with you again in half a minute." Without waiting to give him time to consider, she stepped lightly across the floor, and passed out. In another moment she was safe in her room, whence she easily gave alarm, and returned when the madman was secured.—*Annals of Insanity.*

A DUKE'S CIGAR.

"Kissing goes by favor," says an old adage, the truth of which the following incident illustrates:—His Honor Croute, a judicial functionary in the west of England, was recently one of the four gentlemen in a first Western Railway Carriage, of divided compartments. He occupied one compartment, and two others the other compartment. The three chatted pleasantly. His Honor, seated, apart, joined not in the paper. At length one of them said, "It is very cool, will you permit me to smoke a cigar?" The two with him replied readily in the affirmative; but his Honor, on being addressed, replied not. The querist then lit his cigar, and his Honor exclaimed, "If you do not put it out I will give you in charge to a policeman." He repeated this. The smoker said, "Don't give me in charge, as I am on particular business. Here is my card, and I will answer the law in any shape." The card bore the words "His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge." His Honor permitted the Duke to smoke without let or hindrance.—*Western Times.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

HOME VOICES.

BY JENNY A. STONE.

Once again my steps have wandered
Round my dear and cherished home;
And the loved ones' gentle voices
Softly on mine ears have come.
Tones of love and joy and gladness,
All unmixed with pain or grief;
O, how could we think of sadness,
When our joy must be so brief.

Clouded were the glorious heavens,
Yet a light was shining round,
Brightening, gladdening every object
On that loved and hallowed ground.
Words may never tell my feelings,
When my home first met my sight—
That dear spot which fancy ever
Bathes in floods of golden light.

Then my mother's arms were round me,
And the tears were falling fast;
Tears of joy—for to her vision
Was recalled the glorious past:
When beneath our roof-tree gathered
All our gladsome, happy band:
When from out our joyous circle
There was missed no cherished hand.

Then, like some far-distant music,
Softly borne upon the breeze:
Like the sweet and merry warbling
Of the birds amid the trees:
Like the low and softened chiming
Of a bell at evening's hour,
Came the music of young voices
O'er my heart with magic power.

Once again I have departed
From that scene of earthly bliss;
But no words can ever picture
How its peaceful joys I miss—
How my heart is ever turning
To that dearly cherished home:
Or, how fondly will its memory
O'er my bosom ever come.

Should I part with it forever,
Deep blue seas between us roll:
Still my heart would there be turning,
Like the magnet to the pole;
And home softly whispering
Words of never-dying love,
On this earth will e'er be with me,
And be with me, too, above.

When the twilight shades have gathered
Round about the listening earth,
Or when thoughtfulness comes o'er me—
Even in the hours of mirth—
Then home visions cluster round me,
And home voices whisper near,
Peaceful words in tones of music,
Words the wanderer loves to hear.

O, if ever from my bosom
Thanks for mercies shown arise—
O, if incense e'er is wafted
From this heart to yonder skies—
'Tis when thoughts of home surround me,
And when those sweet voices come;
O, 'tis then I thank thee, Father,
Thank thee for my precious home.

THE LADY OF LYONS.

BULWER'S CELEBRATED PLAY IN STORY FORM.

BY MATURIN M. BALLOU.

LYONS—the gay and brilliant French capital of the departments of the Rhone and Loire, is second, in point of beauty, commerce, and opulence, only to the great metropolis of France "la belle Paris." There are many interesting associations in relation to its history and old Roman origin, its founders having made it the centre of the commerce of the Gauls. In Nero's time it was almost totally destroyed by fire, but through the munificence of that great Roman emperor, it was rebuilt, and there are antiquities still observable, telling of this ancient period. During the revolution there was no city in France that suffered so severely as Lyons; here the wild bloodthirsty demon of the times reigned supreme, and the population of the city was reduced nearly 50,000! Alas! republican France, thou hast dearly bought experience, and thy "citizen king" sits painfully on his throne.

Not long subsequent to the close of the bloody drama of the French revolution, which caused all Europe to tremble, that period, the history of which chills the blood of the modern reader—the incidents of the following tale occurred.

There resided at Lyons a rich family named Deschappelles, of no particular note other than what their extensive wealth necessarily gave them. The father was still at the opening of our tale a merchant, although advanced in years, and already possessing, as one might reasonably suppose, enough of this world's wealth. Yet he still held on, the pride of being considered the greatest commercial house in Lyons being too seducing to admit of his retiring into the bosom of his family to enjoy the close of a long, industrious, and honorable mercantile life. He still designed to accumulate more wealth, and to extend his business.

Madame Deschappelles was a lady of most unequalled pride, and entirely wrapped up in the desire to form a high match for her beautiful child, Pauline, whose extreme loveliness of person and ladylike accomplishments had already, while she was yet but eighteen, gained her the name of the belle of Lyons. Pauline was the constant theme and care of her mother, and neither care nor expense was spared to render her as accomplished in mind as nature had made her in person. She was surrounded by all the luxury ingenuity could devise, or wealth procure. The mansion of the family was one of unsurpassed beauty, contiguous to which, there were grounds and gardens of the most enviable beauty. The Deschappelles moved in the first circles of the society of Lyons, although in blood they were not noble; indeed, at the time of which we write, there was no acknowledged nobility in France, no lords, no marquises, but all were simple citizens, for the revolution had laid the shepherd's crook beside the sceptre.

One lovely afternoon, Madame Deschappelles and Pauline sat gossipping in their boudoir, when a servant announced Monsieur Beausant, a rich and courted gentleman, and only son of the late marquis, who lost his life during "the reign of terror." He entered and found the mother and daughter together; Pauline admiring and dissecting a most rare and beautiful bouquet, while her mother gossipped about the ball of the previous evening.

Beausant was an accomplished and handsome man, besides being able to boast of gentle descent, which, though it was not openly encouraged, yet there were still many to respect, nay, very few in Lyons, who did not respect the old houses and descendants of the nobility. Beausant, after complimenting Pauline upon her appearance on the previous evening, on which occasion he had met her at the ball, frankly declared to her that she had conquered his heart, and ended by offering her his hand and fortune.

Pauline coolly rejected his offer, but Beausant was not a man to give up his purpose so lightly. He appealed to Madame Deschappelles, telling her of the advantage of such an alliance, stating that his fortune was not exceeded by that of any person in the province, and indeed that he should be noble, but that the revolution had robbed him of his titles. The mother of Pauline had formed brighter plans for her daughter than that she should marry the son of a marquis, and frankly told Beausant so, in reply to his arguments—saying she should marry a prince.

Beausant left the house in a rage, at being refused by a merchant's daughter, determining to hide himself in his chateau, for he deemed aright that the story would soon be all over Lyons, the proud Madame Deschappelles being a person who would make the most of such an event. In a frame of mind which may better be imagined than described, he hastened from the house and on his way fell in with a young acquaintance, a man of gentle birth and a bosom companion of Beausant, and whose principal trait of character was an extravagantly foppish disposition. This man's name was Glavis; he too had been refused the hand of Pauline, not long prior to the opening of this tale. Beausant confided his mortification to his friend, and learned this fact in return, whereupon both vowed vengeance upon the proud girl, and they sought the chateau to conspire together upon the subject.

On their way they stopped at a little road-side inn, in a village near the city, to dine. While at the public house called the Golden Lion, they witnessed some games in which a young peasant of noble bearing won the prize, and whom his companions called prince, a familiar name they had given him, as he was the leader of all their sports, and the avenger of all their wrongs. He was one who, though young in years, they all looked up to on account of his extraordinary attainments, and the generous and noble spirit that filled his breast and prompted every action.

Beausant was led through curiosity to enquire relative to this young peasant Claude Melnot, and learned from the landlord that he was prompted to acquire all these accomplishments, of which he is said to be the master, through the deep love he bore for Pauline Deschappelles, the only daughter of the rich merchant of Lyons. Beausant also learned from mine host of the Golden Lion that Claude's father had formerly been gardener in the family of the Deschappelles, but had deceased about two years since, leaving to his son and widow a goodly property. A change then came over Claude; he took to study, to fencing, dancing, music, learned to paint, and in short, strove by diligence to attain every accomplishment within his power, until he did indeed become the wonder of the village. "Ah!" said the honest landlord, "he is so proud, and yet gentle, and looks so like a prince, no wonder they all call him so, and it is all for love of the beauty of Lyons, in whose father's garden he has worked when a boy."

The ready wit of Beausant took fire at this relation, and a plan for his revenge immediately struck him. He took Glavis aside, and proposed to him to seem to humor the love of young Melnot, to communicate with him, supply him with money, dresses, retinue and all, and thus pass him off as a *prince*; introduce him to Pauline as such, and enable him to obtain her hand, and then leave her to find herself the wife of a peasant's son, a *serf!* Glavis consented to the proposal, gladly availing himself of any means whereby to avenge himself on the proud girl. And yet, sooth to say, he thought far more of the sport of thus manufacturing a prince than of revenge, while the latter spirit alone actuated Beausant. They procured writing materials, and forthwith sent a note to Claude to meet them at the Golden Lion, relating therein that the writer, Beausant, knew the passion of his heart, and that he would aid him, nay, promised that he should realize his brightest and most sanguine hopes.

Come with us, reader, to the humble cottage of the widow; her son has just entered, bearing in his hand the prize of the games—a beautiful gun, which he has won. He calls on his mother to examine it, and give him joy that he has met with such success.

Though the good mother loves well her noble boy, and is even more proud of him than she is willing to show, yet she chides him gently for thus employing his time and thoughts, and asks what these things are worth.

"Mother," said the proud spirited boy, "what is ribbon worth to a soldier? Worth—everything. Glory is priceless!"

"Ay, Claude, but what good does it do thee to learn Latin and sing songs, to play the guitar, to fence, to dance, to paint—all very fine, my son; but what does it bring in?"

"Wealth—wealth, my mother, wealth to the mind, wealth to the heart, high thoughts, bright deeds, the hope of fame, the ambition to be worthier to love Pauline."

The mother knew her son's love for the beauty of Lyons, and strove to convince him of its hopeless character; but his faithful heart could not dream of aught but final success. That very day had he poured into verse the warm and ardent promptings of his heart, a tribute to its idol. He was emboldened to do this by reason of Pauline's having worn upon her bosom the flowers he had sent her anonymously, each day for the last six weeks, the rarest to be had, and it was one of these bouquets that engaged her at the opening of the tale. He had sent the verses to Pauline, having signed his own name to them, and now impatiently awaited an answer, and the arrival of his messenger. Soon his comrade, who had borne his message, returns, and hands him back the paper he had sent; his verses were returned to him! and with insult, too, for his messenger had been beaten, and himself threatened with a like welcome should he show his face. Claude, perhaps, might have borne with some degree of patience the return of his verses, though he told his comrade and messenger, in answer to his question, "What could you have sent that should so have offended them?"

"Not a word that a serf might not have written to an empress."

But *blows*—blows to his messenger, and threats to himself—this he could not tamely submit to; and while exercised by the passionate feelings thus excited, he received the letter despatched from Beausant and Glavis, at the Golden Lion, as we have before mentioned.

He snatched wildly at any chance for revenge, or at any rate to satisfy his own wishes; nor could he tell which was strongest in his heart—love or revenge, when he read the assurance that Pauline should be his. He hastened forthwith to the Golden Lion, and there he found his tempters, who laid out the plot that he must follow. His honest nature revolted at first in contemplating the proposed deception, but while in this angry mood, he was led to consent to the wish of Beausant, who bound him by an oath to carry out the proposed plan, and marry Pauline, disguised as a foreign prince.

The plot was well conceived, and conducted with consummate skill; and soon Claude appeared in Lyons, and at the house of M. Deschappelles, through the introduction of Beausant, as the Prince of Como. Well did he become his splendid dress, and now all the accomplishments which he had so industriously acquired, served well his purpose. Handsome, too—he was very handsome, and no one could woo Pauline as he could do; for no one really loved her so well. Day after day the deception was successfully prosecuted, until Claude was at length engaged to the beauty of Lyons as her future husband. Pauline loved him with a depth of affection rarely found in high life. True she was at first caught by his noble appearance and title, but she soon loved him for himself alone. Each day Claude felt more and more that he would give the whole world, did he possess it, to be released from his guilty oath, and though he endeavored to persuade Beausant to release him from it, it was all in vain. The consent of Madame Deschappelles was easily gained; indeed, it rather anticipated the formal request, for she was completely taken with the title and style of the Prince of Como, whom she pronounced to be the most accomplished person she had ever known.

There was an honest, rough old gentleman, a cousin of the family, and a colonel in the French army, resident at this time in the family; a man who had a supreme contempt for princes and all dignitaries, other than those the army recognized and created. He was led by some slight circumstance to believe that the Prince of Como was a humbug, or rather that he was no prince at all; and in the course of some conversation with Claude, in which the latter entwitted him, he became so enraged that he challenged him to fight. Claude at first refused, but being pressed, he at length took the proffered sword produced by Colonel Damas, and after a short contest, disarmed him; but sparing his person, he returned him his sword. This gentlemanly act on the part of Claude was a seed which took root in the colonel's heart, and bore fruit in after time to Claude, of deep and honest friendship.

Melnot, in the practice of his character as a prince, scattered the wealth that Beausant had placed at his command with a lavish hand, secretly enjoying the irritation that it caused those whose tool he now felt he was. In vain did he beseech Beausant and Glavis to release him from his oath. Having now enjoyed the society of Pauline, her confidence and affections, he loved her more dearly than ever, and would rather make almost any sacrifice than to deceive her into an alliance which would, perhaps, break her heart, and at any rate render him hateful in her eyes ever after. But at each turn and pass there stared him in the face his dreadful oath—there was no reprieve!

In his converse with Pauline, Claude, although he was obliged to support an aristocratic character, yet endeavored to inculcate the principles he would have her governed by, were he in his own station; and thus without her realizing it, there there were placed in her heart the germs of an honorable regard for merit, be it found in what class it might. He taught her the folly of being a pensioner on the dead, and that brave deeds were the ancestors of brave men. Yet all the while was he deceiving the beautiful and gentle girl, who had learned to love him with a passion near akin to actual devotion. Ever and anon as he held sweet converse with her, and listened to her dear and devoted language, his conscience would smite him almost beyond endurance.

At length, by a well arranged plan of Beausant's, it was determined that it should be made to appear that the prince was in danger of being arrested by the directory, and that he must depart immediately, thus compelling Pauline to marry him at once, or lose him, perhaps, forever. This scheme, so cunningly devised, was successful, and the great haste necessary was the excuse for an immediate wedding, without the customary settlements and other ceremonies, these things being left for after adjustment. The arrangements were so made that the vehicle which bore the prince and his bride from Lyons, should pass through the village of Claude's nativity, and at the door of the Golden Lion it was to break down, and there end all his greatness. Pauline was then to be conducted, as though merely for shelter, to his mother's cot, hard by, and then all was to be explained to her, and she to know that she had married a peasant.

This plan, so cunningly devised, was put in execution, and at nightfall of the day on which they were married, Claude and Pauline were soon walking along the by path from the Golden Lion to the Widow Melnot's cottage, the pretended accident having occurred. Claude suggested that they should seek a private roof for shelter, rather than the tavern, and also that he knew of an honest one near by, where they might rest in safety. They passed the little path towards the cottage, and soon entered its lowly, but honest roof. The mother rushes to clasp her son in her arms, who has necessarily been long absent from her; she calls him by name, and presses him to her heart—a strange thought enters the head of Pauline.

"Does the old woman know thee, prince? O, I see you have done her some kindness—another evidence of thy good heart—is it not so?"

"Would that the earth might swallow me," said the guilty, half-distracted Claude.

"Madame," said the Widow Melnot to Pauline, "I fear it is you who know him not."

The truth broke upon Pauline, and she was driven, in her heart-broken passion, almost to madness. She could hardly believe it was not all a dream, and begged of Claude to undeceive her, to say it was but a trick to try her, a jest, anything; but no! it was hard, stern reality, and Pauline Deschappelles was the wife of a *serf!*

There stood Claude—no less miserable than she whom he had so deeply wronged. He told her all—how the tempters found him a fitting tool for their foul purposes; how she had trod upon the worm and it had turned and stung her. He told her that at the altar his guilty oath expired, that there his vengeance ceased, and from that moment she was sacred; that on the morrow, pure and virgin as when she left her father's house, she should return to it; then committing her to the care of his mother, he seated himself at the table and drew up a full confession of the fraud, which might serve as sufficient evidence for a divorce. With this, he despatched a messenger to Lyons to Mr. Deschappelles, that he could come for his child!

How could he meet that girl's father? the parent of her he had so deeply wronged? There was to be a scene enacted in that humble cottage, on the morrow, which would prove every power of the heart.

The day came, and with it Monsieur and Madame Deschappelles, accompanied by Colonel Damas. There were angry words there, but none from Claude; he bore every reproach, every censure, in silence, for he was broken-hearted—his spirit was completely subdued. Did Pauline, too, censure him then? no! She looked about the neat, but humble apartment, and saw the accomplishments that each instrument and ornament bespoke its owner to have acquired, and all, too, for the love of her! She saw, too, a portrait of herself, drawn from memory, and by his hands, a masterly piece. What though he had done wrong in this one matter, tempted by the witty tongue and ready wit of a villain! What though he had deceived her, he had acknowledged all, and made her free again! What though he was a peasant (perhaps the hardest thought for her to conquer), yet still she loved him, ay, with all the devotion of her woman's heart.

The heat of the resentment was passed, the angry words had been spoken, and they were about to part, when Pauline rushed into the arms of Claude and told him she forgave him all, all was forgotten—but the stern voice of her father recalled her, threatening to disinherit her, and disown her forever, if she clove to that wretched man. Again did she seek his breast, telling him she would resign wealth, title, state, all, that she would work for him, tend him, and never reproach him for the past.

It was a most touching scene; even Col. Damas, with all his sternness, was moved to tears. These last words were the hardest strokes of all to Claude, for they showed him what a heart he had wronged.

"Pauline," said he, "the husband of a being so beautiful in her noble and sublime tenderness may be poor, may be low born, (there is no guilt in the decrees of Providence), but he should be one who can look thee in the face without a blush, to show by love does not bring remorse, who can fold thee to his breast and say: 'Here there is no deceit!' I am not that man.'

Col. Damas, who had come to censure, was struck with the noble spirit of Claude, and giving him his hand, told him he would make an excellent soldier and offered him a place in his own regiment. This was accepted upon the spot, and Claude, bidding them all farewell, told them he would either never return, or else he would come back with his honor redeemed, and as one worthy the love of Pauline. He tore himself from the last embrace of her he loved, pressed his dear old mother to his heart, and rushed from the cottage. He joined the regiment of Col. Dumas, and on the next day marched with the "grand army."

Months, years, rolled on, and still Claude was engaged in the wars, rising gradually from rank to rank, until he was high in command. At the battle of the plains of Lodi, he was declared by the commander-in-chief to be the hero of the day, and publicly heralded as such. The booty, too, that fell to his share from many a well-fought battle, had rendered him pecuniarily rich.

After the expiration of a little more than two years from the time of his separation from Pauline, his regiment came to Lyons. Hardly had he entered the city with Col., now Gen. Damas, before he learned that Pauline was soon to be married to the evil-hearted Beausant. As for himself, he was probably forgotten, not having been heard from since he left his home, for he had assumed the name of Morea, on entering the army, determining not again to wear his father's honest one, until he should have redeemed his honor.

He ascertained that the day of his arrival was the very one on which the marriage contract was to be signed. Gen. Damas, having met with M. Deschappelles, was invited to be present on the occasion, and had agreed to do so. Claude's heart yearned again to behold Pauline, if only for the last time. Was it for this that he had encountered danger, spilled his blood freely, yet still hoped on, prayed on, for this day, on which he might again fold her, and now that it had come, the hour he had singled out from time, and marked for bliss, how wretched he was! Pauline lost to him forever, what charm had life for him now? In vain did Gen. Damas endeavor to cheer him; in vain did he tell him that there was in store a bright fate in the future for so brave and constant a heart. Claude said to him: "Bid me not hope; I could not bear again to fall from such a heaven."

The hour for signing the contract has arrived. The notary sits in the parlor of the house of M. Deschappelles, with all the papers drawn up in proper form before him. Pauline was there, with her parents, when Gen. Damas, accompanied by Claude, entered, and introduced him by the assumed name of Morea. All were proud to meet Col. Morea, the celebrated hero, and even thanked Damas for the honor he had conferred upon them by the introduction. There, too, sat Beausant, the evil-minded deceiver, who was to become the husband of Pauline, now busily engaged with the notary.

Claude, favored in his disguise by his military rank and dress, and also by the bronzed hue that time and toil had added to his complexion, beside a dark silky moustache, ran little risk of being recognized; and he also wore his military cloak wrapped well about him. He approached Pauline, to whom he was introduced by General Damas, as a friend of Melnot; one who had slept in the same tent, and fought in the same field. He had conversed with Pauline but a few moments in his disguised voice, when he gathered that some strange mystery hung about the proposed alliance, for Pauline begged him to tell Melnot that she had ever loved him, that for years she had not nursed a thought that was not his.

"Tell him," said the devoted girl, "even now that I would rather share his lowliest lot, walk by his side an outcast, work for him, beg with him, live upon the light of one kind smile from him, than wear the crown the Bourbons lost."

Claude could hardly believe his own ears—that she still loved him, and yet was about to wed another. Then her vows, too; how it brought back the old times to his heart! It well nigh unmanned him. Turning to Gen. Damas, he soon ascertained from him that which he had just learned, that Monsieur Deschappelles was on the verge of bankruptcy; that on the morrow, unless he could raise the sum that Beausant had already offered to furnish, if Pauline would give him her hand, he would be ruined. This was the barter—the condition was Pauline's hand; unless that money could be raised, the aged limbs of her father must on the morrow be stretched on the damp floor of a prison. She could not bear the thought; she loved her father, and consented to the sacrifice; she was to marry Beausant, though her heart was far away with him she loved.

The notary being ready to execute the deed, it only required the signature of Pauline. The money was then to be paid over, and her father's was still the great house of Lyons.

"The papers are prepared, and we only await your signature," said Beausant to Pauline; and she moved towards the table to close the contract.

"Stay, lady!" said Melnot, still in a disguised voice; "were but your duty with your faith united, would you still share the low-born peasant's lot?"

"Would I?" said she. "Ah! better death with him I love than all the power—which is but the flower that crowns the victim!"

This was enough. "The night is passed," said Claude, "and joy cometh with the morning!" He seized the contract, satisfied himself of the amount named therein, and *tore it to atoms!* All sprang to their feet with astonishment, and M. Deschappelles asked the meaning of this insult.

"Peace, old man," said Claude, and he gave him a pocket-book, saying, "there's not a coin that is not bought and hallowed in the cause of nations with a soldier's blood."

He spoke now in his natural voice, and Pauline recognizing him, with the wildest joy, rushed into his arms! O, the joy of that moment to Claude, the consciousness of his redeemed honor, his ability to serve, ay, save her father, all was as his heart could wish.

He had returned after redeeming his honor, and could now look Pauline in the face, and call on France to sanction her forgiveness. The joy and rapture of that meeting beggars description. But too proud were Madame and Monsieur Deschappelles to marry their child to the hero of an hundred battles, and one, too, whose wealth was of no small amount.

They were all happy, save Beausant and Glavis, who were fooled and duped in all their schemes, and now were glad to hide themselves from observation.

Thus the same love that tempted Claude into sin, being true love, also worked out his redemption.

SHOOTING DESERTERS.

After the siege of Rodigo, several Englishmen, who deserted to the French, and were re-taken, were tried by court-martial, and ordered to be shot. They were all good specimens of the dare-devils of war, and bore their sentence with the greatest nonchalance. "Take my shoes," one of them said to a soldier near by, "they are better than yours, and you will want them." Whilst standing before a pit, which had been dug for them, and whilst the firing party were drawn up ready to give the fatal volley, another of the culprits, on looking down, and observing the hole half full of water, remarked to a man next to him, "You see they are going to give us a watery grave." When the volley was fired, all fell but one man, who remained standing, apparently untouched. Some of the soldiers, horrified at the sight, were in hopes the unhappy culprit would have been permitted to live. But the indignation of the firing party against the culprits, who had committed the heinous crime of fighting against them in the ranks of the enemy, was so great that they did not give him a chance. Reloading in haste, several of the men ran up to the poor fellow, and blew his brains out. "He thought he was going to escape," observed one of the firing party, as they leisurely returned to the ranks, "but he was very much mistaken."—*New York Dispatch.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

BUILDING NESTS.

BY GEORGE W. BUNGAY.

A widow from her mates apart,
Is that lone, leafless tree;
The birds' nest, like a broken heart,
Swings ever fitfully.

When leaves were green and flowers gay,
That lonely tree was blest;
The robin with his roundelay
Came there to build his nest.

When autumn set the leaves on fire,
Which winter quenched with snow,
The inconstant bird awoke his lyre
Upon another bough.

In spring the nest with song was filled,
But now 'tis filled with leaves;
Take heed, ye robins, how you build,
And what your home receives.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE RUBY BROOCH.

BY EMERET H. SEDGE.

Mr. Mantell came home from his counting-room one evening where he had been detained to an unusually late hour, and found his wife waiting for him in their private parlor—a tasteful and retired apartment to which visitors were never admitted.

"You would have seen me half an hour sooner," said he, throwing himself heavily into his arm-chair, "if, just as I had dismissed my book-keeper and was staying a few moments to finish a letter, I had not received a call of some importance. No less a personage than Ned Wingate came in, and in set terms asked me for our Emma. It is a very good beginning."

"And you gave your consent?" said Mrs. Mantell, with a sweet, glad smile. "Emma will be so happy."

"Not I, how can you be so thoughtless? Emma is scarcely sixteen, and Ned has a naked profession, with little money remaining, and no prospect of a client. I expect to be assailed by a swarm of these fellows, who are willing to hazard their dignity somewhat for the chance of getting a pretty little heiress," and Mr. Mantell rubbed his hands complacently, and smoothed his ruffles.

"Then you gave Edward a decided refusal?" said his wife, with a dashed expression. She was thinking how disappointed her daughter would be.

"Nor that either; it is not always advisable to proceed with great directness in these delicate matters. I merely told him, that both he and Emma were very young, and though they might suppose themselves attached to each other now, their short acquaintance did not authorize them to expect that they would be of the same mind a year hence; but added, that if at the end of that period they had evinced no volatility of affection, I would talk with him candidly on the subject of his wishes."

"And Edward—"

"Wasted his rhetoric in endeavoring to convince me that his choice was unalterably fixed, and undertook to answer for Emma also. But his persuasions were altogether powerless, for I had my reasons which kept me from indulging the supposition of their mutual fidelity. I sent him away with the condition that I had named, as a kind of temporary comfort, till being diverted by a new fancy, he should forget this present one."

"Are you not severe?" inquired Mrs. Mantell, timidly. "I did not imagine that there was anything objectionable in Mr. Wingate. He is very clever and popular."

"Among the ladies, he is very handsome, no doubt; and has turned our little Emma's head with his dainty whiskers; but he certainly will not make headway in the world. I have been watching him, and the stamina is not in him, and it would be both madness and cruelty to throw Emma and her fortune away upon a fellow who could not take care of either."

"But you have in a degree given your consent; and if their mutual attachment continues a twelvemonth, and nothing is more likely, you will have but one alternative," ventured Mrs. Mantell.

"Nothing is more *unlikely*. I shall pay a little incidental attention to my daughter's quasi engagement, which will doubtless terminate according to my wishes. Do not look troubled, for I shall be neither impetuous nor harsh. You must have observed, my love, that it has ever been my custom to undermine the obstacles in my path, and must allow that, hitherto, I have been successful in removing them. I am not the man to surround myself with a disturbance. I have never known an management and expediency fail of bringing my undertakings to a happy issue."

Mrs. Mantell attempted no reply, but she was not satisfied. Ever since her marriage she had watched the workings of her husband's chief agent, expediency, and had seen that sometimes its activity infringed the province of nice honor and strict justice. She often blamed herself for her excessive sensitiveness, and had tried to school herself into perfect confidence. But at last the happiness of her child was in his power, and she could not wholly trust him, for she knew that he habitually placed gold and distinction above personal excellence. Nevertheless, it was useless to say anything; she would wait.

The next day Mr. Mantell went softly into the library which opened from a corner of the drawing-room. He left the door ajar, and taking a ponderous volume into his hand sat down behind it. But the book was heavy and the light sombre, and so somniferous was the effect of both, that in less than a moment Mr. Mantell's hands fell to his lap with their burden, his head reclined against the wall, and he was evidently lost in comfortable repose.

Precisely at that time Emma flew to the outer door and admitting Ned Wingate, conducted him to the drawing-room. An hour passed in such small conversation as is sufficiently agreeable to lovers thus engaged, but not specially interesting in the rehearsal. Their mutual relations were fully discussed, and while they deplored the stern decree that permitted them to be only acquaintance and friends for a long, long year, they joined in laughing at the very possibility of unfaithfulness in either.

"I could sooner die than prefer another to you," said the blushing girl, with the generous enthusiasm of a first affection, after she had listened to the earnest protestations of her lover. They were completely happy, and the dreams of Mr. Mantell also seemed moved by gladness, for he smiled as he slept!

It was time for Wingate to go, and he took out a small ruby brooch, and giving it to Emma, said:

"It was my mother's, and I value it above price. I do not wish to ask you every day we meet, if your regard for me is undiminished, and so offend you by my pertinacity. But I shall be a jealous friend, and shall not be content unless I frequently receive from you some token, some proof of your continued love. Let the sign between us be this brooch, this ruby, which has a setting of sacred associations more precious than the visible gold that surrounds it. When you wear it, let me have the assurance that you are mine still; do not wear it otherwise, and if it reads such a blessed language to me during an entire year, I can have no words to express my estimation of its worth."

Emma took the jewel, and with tears and smiles fastened it to her collar, murmuring something about eternal constancy. But suddenly she paused, and her countenance fell.

Wingate tenderly inquired the cause of her hesitation.

"Why, nothing, really," said Emma, stammering; "but only this morning, papa promised me some diamonds, and just see, it would not be possible for me to wear a brooch that did not match my ear-rings and bracelet; at least, it would be in very bad taste."

Wingate looked at the distressed little beauty before him, and laughed merrily. The dreams of Mr. Mantell sent a smile and a complacent grimace over his features.

Ned answered gayly, and yet in very earnest tones. "You certainly will not divide your love between me and the diamonds so unequally as not to be willing to wear my ruby half of the time? I know the glittering stones are not dangerous rivals,"—here Mr. Mantell shook his head—"but indulge me so far as never to wear them twice in succession, that I may the more frequently be made glad by the assurance that the ruby will always afford, when I see it upon you. If you dress for my eyes, you can select no ornament that will shed such beauty over you as this."

"I will not have the diamonds at all," exclaimed Emma, filled with compunction. "I could have no pleasure in them, if you were not satisfied. But you know that we had not talked of the brooch, when father spoke of these, and I had begun to think about them."

"I am not afraid of the diamonds," replied Wingate, cheerfully; "only promise me, that you will allow the ruby to appear in its turn;" he added, more gravely, "but only when you intend that its appearance shall be as significant as you know my heart desires."

"I promise most solemnly," said Emma, bending half in earnest, half sportively to the hand of her lover, which was extended towards her.

"And if your affection for me should die out of your heart," continued Wingate, "it will be sufficient to send me the brooch. I should know what it meant. It would be better than to hear you say with your own lips the dreadful words."

"O, Edward, how can you speak so? You know that I shall never, never send it to you."

Wingate re-assured his little friend, and made his peace with a kiss, and thus they parted.

As the outer door closed, light footsteps were heard flying up stairs, and Emma hastened to her room to study the shape of the ruby and think of the blissful meaning that had just been given it. When her door was heard to close, Mr. Mantell awoke, and passing stealthily out sought his counting-room.

A few weeks later, Mr. Mantell said to his daughter as he rose from the dinner-table: "Let me see you in your white silk and diamonds this evening, at Mrs. Morton's."

"I wore that dress last week," said Emma, with a confused, deprecating manner, "and I fancied that my rose-colored gauze would be very pretty to-night."

"It might do well enough for an ordinary occasion," replied Mr. Mantell, "but this party, you are aware, is given in compliment to my friend, Warren Graves, who will take his seat in Congress at the commencement of the next session, and I particularly desire that my daughter should appear in as distinguished a manner as possible."

Emma attempted a reply, but her father put his hand playfully over her mouth, and bade her appear in what she chose, only it would greatly please him exceedingly if she would follow the first direction that he had ever given her concerning her dress.

Emma gave the subject her most serious consideration, and not being able to determine whom she should displease, her father or lover, decided upon a compromise, which she hoped would carry her quietly through her prospective embarrassment. She would dress as her father desired, but would also attach the little ruby pin to a velvet ribbon about her neck. She did not think that it would be particularly noticed, except by one for whom she wore it.

When the carriage came round, Emma met her parents at the door, and her father, as he assisted her in fastening her cloak, inquired, in a bantering tone, if it was becoming fashionable to wear various styles of ornaments at once, like a rosy, country maiden. If so, there was even time then to order a sapphire for one ear, and an emerald for the other. And he added, in his usual tone:

"You know, Emma, that I admire an elegant simplicity in decoration. Wear one thing or the other, but don't look as though you had gathered all your trinkets together for exhibition."

The poor child, thinking that the innocent ruby scarcely deserved the persecution that it received, and resolving that she would explain the whole to Wingate, before he should be troubled by the absence of the brooch, snatched the ribbon from her neck, and hastened to deposit it safely in her room. She did not observe that the pin dropped from it to the floor; but Mr. Mantell chanced to see it glistening upon the carpet, and he picked it up while the attention of his wife was called in another direction.

Warren Graves was a political celebrity in his own vicinity. He was not wealthy, and he was unmarried. It was said by his friends that, absorbed by his disinterested service of his country, he sought neither the pleasures of domestic life, nor the ease and distinction which riches afford; yet it was surmised in uncharitable quarters, that if he could obtain a pretty wife and money at once, he would not delay to benefit himself by the opportunity. He was not young or handsome, but his manner was insinuating, without exciting suspicion, and his conversation fascinated the attention, if it did not satisfy the heart.

Emma found that Wingate had arrived at Mrs. Morton's before her, and just as she was about to speak to him, Mr. Mantell called her attention to Warren Graves, who was approaching, and who immediately joined them. She could not escape, and she was presently so much interested in the lively and agreeable sallies of her father's friend, that she almost forgot that she wished to. She even did not notice that Wingate, having watched her attentively for a moment, instead of coming to her, as was his custom, retired with an uneasy and dissatisfied expression to another apartment, whence he still observed her.

Emma's enjoyment was at last interrupted by a sudden thought of her friend, and she turned abruptly to seek him, and make the necessary explanation, which so burdened her conscience; but Graves begged to be allowed to detain her a few minutes only; he wished to show her several rare flowers, then blooming in the conservatory, which had been opened to the guests. Mr. Mantell motioned her to comply, and she took the proffered arm of Graves, laughing in spite of her annoyance at a whimsical and complimentary remark from him, with a girlish appreciation of fun. It would not have been easy for her to guess what an impression her appearance of satisfaction was making upon Wingate, who smiled bitterly, and walked still further from her. For the first time in his life, he felt that he was poor and without a name, and how vain were his anticipations of future success.

Emma seemed, to herself, constrained by a spell which forced her in every direction but the one she chose. At last she was able to control her own movements, and she hastened to seek Wingate, but went from room to room in vain; he was not to be found. She forgot everything but her regret, and went home with a heavy heart, and cried herself to sleep. It was not till morning that she had courage to look at the ruby, and her consternation may be easily conceived, when on unlocking the casket that should contain the precious gift, it was not to be found. She made immediate inquiries on all hands, and wearied herself with searching in improbable places, and creeping, again and again, up and down the long, winding, gloomy flight of stairs.

Her father bade her not mind the loss of such a trifle, and tossed her a bank note with which to supply its place. She received the money in silence; for she did not dare to explain the true ground of her trouble. The only bright place in her heart was the hope that Edward would call, as he often did, and then she would confess the whole to him, obtain his forgiveness, and everything would be mended so far as the irreparable loss of the brooch would allow.

Mr. Mantell had a similar expectation; accordingly he took care to direct a diminutive "Jeames," who diversified the monotony of door-tending by waiting on his master, and going of errands, to inform Mr. Wingate that whenever he should call, Miss Mantell was not at home, unless perchance that young lady should appear in person at the time, as a palpable contradiction of the assertion; also, that all communications sent and received by the family, which were usually deposited upon the hall table for regular transmission to the office, or to be taken at the convenience of the owners, should, by special intervention, pass through the counting-room. This "Jeames" was a sensible individual, and understood his master and his business equally well, and knew how to obey the one without being loquacious respecting the other. With this explanation, it will be readily understood how it happened that Emma remained at home, day after day, without seeing her lover, and that having written an explanatory and repentant note, there came no response.

Wingate, who was as sensitive and proud as any young gentleman in his circumstances, after several repulses, felt his indignation rise for his support, and that particularly when, on the occasion of his last essay at the inhospitable door, he was confident that he heard the musical voice of Emma, while the servant was solemnly informing him that she was not within. During the suspense, he was well advised that Warren Graves called, and was admitted, almost daily, at Mr. Mantell's. His only consolation was, that Emma still retained the ruby brooch, but this was presently taken away.

Among the bundles and papers that daily passed under the supervision of Mr. Mantell, was at one time, several weeks after Emma's mishap, a book, which she returned to a school friend, accompanied by an unsealed note—a lucky circumstance for Mr. Mantell: for he made it a point of honor never to break a seal. It contained a few words only, in hurried characters:

"Dear Friend,—Pardon me for having retained this so long, when I did not use it.

"In haste,

"Emma Mantell."

The model father read it over several times, congratulated himself that the proper direction chanced to be on the wrapper of the book, and proceeded coolly to enclose the ruby, and to send it to Wingate by his incomparable servant, who could deliver it just as well without a regular address, as with.

Wingate denounced in his embittered heart the capriciousness and audition of woman; resolved never to seek to marry for love, as he strove to believe that such unions were only a figment of romance, and immersed every thought and feeling in the business of his profession, which, fortunately for his peace, at that juncture increased to an unexpected extent of labor and success.

Emma waited, and pined, and sometimes thought that Edward had never cared for her at all, if he could be so mercilessly offended in consequence of a single fault and accident, and she shed many secret tears, till her eyes and cheeks began to fade together. Hoping to restore the former vivacity of his daughter, Mr. Mantell proposed for her a daily drive, and generally accompanied her himself. During the very first of these, as the carriage proceeded through one of the more public streets, Mr. Mantell descried Graves upon the sidewalk, and ordering the horses to be stopped, asked him to join them. The invitation was readily accepted, when Emma's face was seen, and Graves entered the carriage. At that very moment, Wingate passed with a haughty, indifferent step, scarcely natural to him, and as he noticed the scene before him, was anxious to proceed unobserved. But he could not escape Emma's roving eyes. She leaned from the window and bowed to him with a cordiality which the gladness of her heart inspired, since she was so near him once more; she could almost have touched him with her hand. He returned the salutation with a deference which he thought due to a beauty, an heiress, and the prospective wife of a conspicuous and rising man. Emma would have spoken, notwithstanding his formality; but the quick eye of Mr. Mantell detected her intention, and he directed the carriage to move, though his friend was hardly within it. Emma sank back upon the cushions, with only that cold, repelling look, to comfort her breaking heart.

Partly in consequence of the urgent persuasions of Graves, Mr. Mantell determined to spend a portion of the winter at Washington. Emma, engrossed with thoughts of Wingate, never suspected a lover in her father's friend. Graves, who was not lacking in shrewdness, prudently forbore presenting himself to her in that capacity, and as a favored acquaintance, he received from her a measure of confidence and kindness that he might not otherwise have obtained. It was his chief object to make himself necessary to her by every means in his power, and to effectually divert the attentions of dangerous rivals. He did not know that when she seemed most cheerful and happy in his society, he possessed only an intellectual power over her, and that in her heart there was cherished an image which he might not hope to displace.

At length, Graves made a formal proposal to Mr. Mantell for the hand of his daughter, and received a satisfactory answer; it then remained for him the more difficult half of his undertaking, in which he was confident of obtaining success by the sheer force of irresistible eloquence, supported by paternal approval.

While he was carefully dressing, in anticipation of his interview with Emma, a breathless messenger informed him that Mr. Mantell was suddenly and dangerously ill, that the presence of Graves was immediately desired, and that a clergyman was already summoned: he would know the rest. His pulse beat fast with excitement and exultation; the prize was in his hand, almost without the trouble of winning. With the loss of not a moment, he repaired to the residence of his sick friend. He hastened to the sad chamber, but he was too late! He saw only the stiffening remains, the wife overwhelmed with grief, Emma carried from the apartment insensible, and friends of the family, who were fast collecting. He presently learned that the life of Mr. Mantell was thus suddenly terminated by a disease of the heart.

Graves bestowed upon the family of his deceased friend the unremitted attention which their affliction made necessary. He accompanied them to their desolated home, and remained with them after the funeral had been solemnized. It was not his purpose to leave Emma, and so lose any influence over her that he might have acquired. He did not find it easy to determine how he stood with her. She was shy, because her father had told her, in his last moments, that Graves had sought her hand, and that he desired to see them united before he died. She was then so terrified and distressed, that she had no thought of herself, and she consented to whatever was proposed. It would have been decidedly satisfactory to Graves, if he had been present to have received the consent in person, as in that case it would have been more difficult for her to retract it, upon after consideration. He resolved to wait a few days, for the sake of decency, and then bring the affair to a final conclusion.

Emma mourned with her mother through the fine days that followed their return home; but there came a pensively cloudy afternoon, and the dullness and quiet of the atmosphere seemed so in harmony with her own sorrow, and at the same time so soothing, that she could not resist the inclination that tempted her to walk. Gliding from the house unobserved, and choosing the retired streets, she passed on, unconscious of the distance she had traveled, until she was apprised of the extent of her wanderings by the falling rain, that threatened to increase to a heavy shower. In her perplexity, she knew not which way to turn, when she was greatly relieved on beholding a public coach approaching. It proved to be unoccupied, and would take her directly home. As it turned the next corner, it paused to take up another individual, who, like herself, had no other protection from the growing storm. She scarcely noticed the gentleman, as he sank into a gloomy corner of the pondorous coach; but presently raising her eyes to where he sat, a ray of light was reflected to them from the lost ruby which was fastened to his bosom. She started up for very joy on beholding what had cost her so many regrets, and scarcely repressed an exclamation. Her movement aroused her companion, who was no other than Edward Wingate. He forgot his proud determination and sprang to her side.

"I am so glad to see that brooch again! I was afraid you never would forgive me," exclaimed Emma, half beside herself.

"And why did you send it to me?" inquired Wingate, reproachfully.

"I did not send it to you. Don't you remember I told you I never would? How could you suppose that I would do so?"

Wingate referred her remembrance to the note which contained the ruby, and Emma made the explanation, on her side, that had so long oppressed her heart, while she strove to recollect under what circumstances the mischievous note was written. When it flashed upon her mind, there came with it a dreadful suspicion that seemed to be worse than death. It was all a mystery, and she could not think of it. Wingate, who was less excited, and possessed of more legal acumen than the weeping Emma, was before her in conjecturing how they had been separated; but as he had the verbal promise of Mr. Mantell, he did not consider it treachery to his memory to make the most of it. Accordingly, when the coach stopped, a perfect reconciliation had been effected between the two lovers, and they resolved to be happy, without burdening themselves with any artificial tests of mutual faithfulness.

Wingate borrowed a few moments from an imperative engagement, to obtain the consent of Mrs. Mantell to their immediate union, which was given without any hesitation.

He had not been gone half an hour, when Graves called and requested an interview with Emma. She listened to him attentively, as he somewhat confidently proposed and pressed his suit, and replied, as any young lady would, in the same circumstances, by ringing the changes on respect, gratitude, esteem and regret, but dashing off the hopeless conclusion, that could receive no alleviation, "I am engaged already."

THE LOST PURSE.

"What are you going to do with it?" excalied half a dozen ragged urchins to a bright eyed, thinly-clad news-boy, who was holding up a splendid purse in one of his little purple, cold hands, that he had taken, but a few moments previous, from the sidewalk.

"Return it to the owner," replied the honest little fellow, in a firm tone.

"A fool! a fool!" shouted the boys—"wouldn't catch us returning a purse that looked as though it had lots of money in it, as that does; let's see how much there is!" spoke the eldest of the group, and made an attempt to wrest it from the boy's hand.

"It shan't be opened. It's none of our business what it contains, it is none of ours, and if you don't loose your grasp upon it, I will call the police," returned honest Johnny, in a commanding tone.

When alone, Johnny began to wonder what it was best to do. There was no way that he saw, by which the owner could be identified by him. A thought struck him: he would deliver it to the chief of police. But he should lose the sale of his papers if he attended to it then, and if he did, his mother and little sister must go without bread that night, for they had nothing to eat save that which the daily sale of his newspapers brought. What should he do? He paused awhile, and then said, "Mother, you rather go hungry to-night—I am sure I would rather, too—than keep the purse until to-morrow morning. Let's see!" he put his hand into his pocket, and after fumbling a short time, drew forth three cents; "I've got money enough to buy a loaf of bread for little sister's supper and breakfast, and mother and I will go without; so I will at once away, and carry the purse where the owner will obtain it." Thus saying he trudged with the purse in one hand and the large bundle of newspapers in the other. He whistled as he went; for though pinched with cold and hunger, he felt happy, because he was doing right.

After disposing of the purse, and being called an "honest little fellow" by the police, he returned home, and related to his mother what he had done.

The next morning Johnny went from his home a little bluer and colder than usual, for he had no supper or breakfast to fill up his stomach, thereby keeping the cold out. At nightfall he was going home with a light heart, for he had sold papers enough to buy bread sufficient to last his mother, sister, and himself one day, when he was met by the gentleman, to whom he had delivered the purse on the previous day.

"My little fellow," exclaimed the gentleman, patting him on the shoulder, "the purse you left with me has been returned to the owner, who, by the way is an intimate friend of mine, and to reward you, he has offered to take you in his employ, and see what he can make of you."

"Will he give me wages enough to buy mother and sister bread?" anxiously inquired the lad.

"Yes," returned the gentleman, "and more than that. Come," he added, "we'll soon see what he'll do for you." Thus saying, he led the way to a large brick building, nearly opposite to where they had been talking.

A slight ring at the door bell brought the owner of the purse to the door. He was informed by his friend that the lad before him was the one to whom he was indebted for the recovery of his lost property. Johnny met with a warm and hearty welcome from his new found friend, who not only promised to take the honest boy in his employ, but that his mother and sister should be made comfortable and happy. Tears of joy filled the little fellow's eyes as he hastened to inform his mother of his good fortune. They never had occasion to regret his conduct respecting the "Lost Purse."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The History of Napoleon Bonaparte. By John S. C. Abbott. With maps and illustrations. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 541, 606. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Previous to this able work we have never had a full, truthful history of the "Grand Napoleon." English and French historians have been wilfully blind—the former to his virtues, the latter to his faults. With an honesty of purpose and a perseverance in the highest degree commendable, Mr. Abbott for three years has searched all published and manuscript evidences of the life, persistence and correspondence of Napoleon, and after publishing portions of his researchions in various numbers of Harpers' Magazine, he has now issued in two volumes what we may justly regard as the almost most truthful and just life of Napoleon that has ever been written. Fetridge & Co. are the Boston agents.

Marmion. By Sir Walter Scott. Fetridge & Co., Boston.

While critics are quarrelling over the genuineness of this work, the public are purchasing it by the thousands almost daily. No other of Scott's novels has ever been half so generally read, for the public discussion, and Fetridge's fashionable enterprise has caused a rush for it almost without a parallel.

Charlie Johnstone. By Charles Reade. Tickner & Fields, Boston.

This book does not belong to the mushroom literature of the day, but every page has genius, thought and originality stamped upon it. The only book that we have read for a long time that is its equal, is Peg Woffington, issued by the same publishers and from the pen of the same author. Charles Lamb should be better known, for we know and his living equal as a dramatic writer.

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MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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NATIONAL FESTIVITIES.

Now that the smoke of the Fourth of July has passed away—now that the last squib and serpent have fizzed out, and the last cracker exploded—people are beginning to count the cost of the celebration—not the cost in dollars and cents, for that is of little consequence, but the cost in limb and life, occasioned by the careless and indiscriminate use of firearms and fireworks on Independence Day. The twelve months' interval that elapses between our national holidays is apt to make us, Americans, who are so reckless and prodigal of human life, forget the severe lessons that each anniversary teaches or should teach, and rush upon the next celebration more recklessly than ever. The abuses in the manner of celebrating the Fourth have been growing greater and greater every year, till they have at length reached an appalling crisis; and it is time, now that we are cool, to look the evil fully in the face, and be on our guard for the future.

The general programme adopted by our large cities and towns is very good. It is fitting that the day be ushered in and ushered out by the ringing of bells and firing of cannon; the orations, the dinners, the toasts and speeches, the pyrotechnic displays, are appropriate and fitting, and if accidents occur during these regulated modes of rejoicing and thanksgiving, they are casualties incidental to all large public demonstrations. But when we hear of lives lost by the use of crackers, firearms, cannons and pistols in the streets, we cannot accept them as legitimate dispensations; they are the inflictions of wanton carelessness, sanctioned by official remissness. In this city, a worthy citizen of a neighboring town lost his life by the running away of his horses, frightened beyond his control by the sudden explosion of a bunch of crackers under his feet. It has been said that a man has no business to be driving about his horses on a day like this; but we should rather say that a few individuals should not be allowed on that or any other day, to deprive citizens of their usual modes of locomotion on penalty of life and limb. One life lost is of more value than all the pleasure bestowed by the explosion of millions of bunches of fire-crackers. There are hundreds of persons throughout the States now suffering from the culpable use of firearms and fire-crackers in the streets and public thoroughfares on Independence Day.

In our large cities, these pestilent little fireworks are sold everywhere, and used everywhere, with what disastrous effect the newspapers record. In one place bullets were fired into a dwelling house; in another, a rocket passed into a room through a group of eleven persons, putting them in imminent danger. The old bewigged and cocked hat selectmen of the good old town of Boston never contemplated such a desecration of the Fourth, and in future, the Elder America, who holds the Young America in check, must look to it that juvenile folly does not get the upper hand. There are places enough where young and old boys can fire crackers and pistols to their heart's content, without endangering any but themselves; and thus a great blemish on our mode of celebrating our nation's natal day be removed.

And while we are in the fault-finding vein, we may as well remark that we think that burlesque processions on the Fourth are out of place. We like a carnival frolic, and believe with the philosopher, that "he who lives without folly is not so wise as he thinks himself;" but we think a fitter occasion should be selected for the game of "High Jinks," than so great an anniversary as a national birthday. Others may dissent from our views, but "we can't help it—that's our opinion."

FLATTERING.—A correspondent of the Boston Traveller says that a respectable Moslem in the East informed him that in this country there was "no law, order or religion, and that people ate one another." This is too bad! We merely skin one another in driving bargains, and they one another alive in political contests; but there's no cannibalism, we can assure our Oriental friends.

SUPERSTITIONS.—The lower orders of Havana have been greatly exercised lately by a shapeless and nameless spectre, said to haunt a house in the Calle de Sol. We rather think the whole affair was a "sell," got up by some smart Yankee to pass the time.

SNAKES.—A man by the name of Mitchell, living near Peoli, Kansas, has killed more than one hundred rattlesnakes this season, while thousands in the aggregate have been slaughtered in the same vicinity.

THE EASTERN WAR.

This terrible tragedy yet, as we write, drags its slow length along. Each foreign arrival is watched with interest in the expectation of reading the details of some new and sanguinary episode, for we are so constituted, that deeds of carnage possess a certain fascination, no matter how the conscience shrinks from the crime involved in it. We have not the heart to follow out the dark story, but we may remark that the progress of the war has verified the predictions we have made from time to time, after a careful study of the localities, of the forces engaged, the plans developed, the character of the combatants, and the course of their respective governments. Men are yet engaged, though the event has now passed by, in discussing the disastrous attack on the Malakoff tower and the Redan, which cost so many lives, and which demonstrated the determination of the Russians to defend their works and city to the last gasp. Nor has the feeling caused by the firing of the Russians on the Cossack's boat bearing a flag of truce at Hango, by any means subsided. The act of firing on a flag of truce is a crime of the darkest dye. The sacredness of a flag of truce is one of the few white spots on the unsanguined page of war—a trait of chivalry which balances many ferocious usages. Until a belligerent power has declared that no parley will be held, no communication whatever be entertained with its opponent, it has not the shadow of a right for violating the white flag. Still, condemn the act as we may, on the other hand, we must visit with the severest reprehension the abuses of that flag which the British themselves have more than once committed during this war, with the sanction of men high in rank, which perversions have been approved of, and the advantages of them reaped by the British government and people. British officers have sent in flags for good or for frivolous reasons, and then, under cover of the flags, made soundings and measurements, to enable them more safely and surely to attack and destroy their enemies. The British journals have been full of this sharp practice—which they would have condemned in the severest terms had the same trick been served them by their enemy. However, the British have ever been famous for beholding the imperfections and crimes of other people, and for being totally blind to their own. Even this Hango affair never reminded them of what they had done to lower the sanctity of the flag of truce. It would be well for a great nation like England rigidly to avoid all little meannesses, as well as grand crimes, in conducting their warlike operations, and then they would have a right to complain of the misconduct of their enemies. When, for instance, they can explain away their entrapping poor, ignorant men into their service in violation of our laws, we shall be pleased to hear them lecture us on filibustering.

ELEGANT PRESENT.

Col. I. H. Wright has received, through Gen. Edmands, from several of his friends, and friends of the military, a large and magnificent pitcher and two goblets, in token of their gratitude for his defence of the militia system before the legislature last winter. The articles bear the following inscription:—"A token from the friends of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia system to Colonel Isaac H. Wright, rememorative of his eloquent argument for the perpetuation of the institution, April, 1855." The argument thus handsomely commemorated, was a most able and powerful defence on our military system, and convincing to all but its fanatic opponents.

TURKISH LIBERALITY.

The bigoted prejudices against Christians in the dominions of the sultan is fast fading away, as might be anticipated from the present political condition of the Ottomen empire. Lately, the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem was thrown open to the Duke of Brabant, and a number of other distinguished Christian visitors. Under an improved political system, the Turks might yet become valuable members of the great community of nations. We can never forget how the sultan of Turkey sheltered Kossuth and his glorious companions, when the Austrian eagle and Russia bear were prowling on their track.

UNFORTUNATE.

A gentleman of New York, who was poisoned lately by eating some stramonium in a dish of greens—the effect of which, is similar to that produced by an excess of alcoholic beverage, was taken up by the police and carried to the station house for being drunk. His incoherent muttered explanations—"Sposhe I'm poishoned—shtramonium—drank noshin' but my dinner, ole fel—" only increased the indignation of the gentlemanly official who conducted him to the lock-up. The New York police must learn to distinguish between otard and stramonium.

A CHILD OF THE REGIMENT.—Two or three years since, the *Garde Lafayette* of New York adopted the daughter of one of its members who had died, leaving her without friends or support. At the military procession on the Fourth, this young girl, dressed in colors corresponding with the uniform of the French soldiers, appeared with the *Garde*, marching by the side of one of the officers.

CHEAP LIVING IN TEXAS.—You borrow your neighbor's living pan, hook his bacon, and make his hens lay in your own nest. Doughnuts grow on the bushes, and gutta percha oysters can be found most anywhere. For people of "limited means" and no principles, Texas opens a wide area for comfort and kindred eatables.

SUICIDES.—A mania seems to exist in New York for self-destruction. Two women have lately attempted suicide, one of which was successful, and the other was frustrated in her endeavors by some lookers on.

IMMIGRATION.—The German immigration into the United States this year will probably number about 170,000 souls; and the British immigration will number about 70,000.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

Hon. S. A. Douglas and Postmaster Cook have presented Chicago $1000 worth of land.

The widow of De Witt Clinton lately died in Poughkeepsie in her seventy-third year.

Edward Everett's Fourth of July oration at Dorchester was the finest he ever delivered.

Fire crackers on the Fourth frightened a team from Stoughton, causing the driver's death.

Louis Napoleon has been sick, lately. Tears were shed on his recovery.

"Gentlemen may talk of peace—peace," in the East, but it is to go.

Pelissier is said to be a fire eater. He swallowed enough at the Malakoff.

It is untrue that the French in New York intend forcibly to resist the liquor law.

Toads are said to be particularly fond of canker-worms, and eat numbers of them.

An elephant, 120 years old, was lately shot in Birmingham, on account of age.

There is only one squirrel left of the five which were to people Boston Common.

Eleven of our fourteen Presidents have been lawyers. Encouraging to the bri-fless!

Pearls have lately been found in the Ohio, near Cincinnati.

A seceding Mormon has recently been writing a book blowing up Mormonism.

Queen Victoria will soon visit Paris, to see her "beloved cousin" and the exhibition.

Ten thousand lives were lost at the Malakoff. How many will the capture of Sebastopol cost!

Dr. Channing was not opposed to dancing only in public halls.

At the German Sangerfest, New York, not one drunken man was seen.

The Churchman thinks the use of fans in church a sinful luxury.

A doctor approves tight lacing, because it kills off foolish girls.

Gen. Pelissier don't like Louis Napoleon's orders by the telegraph.

Queen Elizabeth never wore a dress twice—and never gave a dress away.

The British Government don't like our stopping recruiting in the States.

James Horrocks, whose father was a drummer under Cromwell, died so late as 1843.

ENGLISH SADDLE HORSES.

The spirited Paris correspondent of the New York Spirit of the Times thinks the English saddle horses are very near perfection. Hear him: "I would rather take Ristori's superiority over Rachel for granted, than sit till midnight in a hot opera house to hear her, instead of going to bed early after a cool stroll, and rising early to take a canter in the wood, which the 'embellishments' have not yet *quite* spoiled. Of all luxuries in this life, give me the luxury of a thoroughly good and well-broken English bloodhorse. I never owned a *first-rate* one before this spring, and now I take back, too, all I ever said about English saddle-horses. We can't *build* anything to equal their best; any more than they can come up to our trotters. If the tales of Eastern travellers be really anything but 'travellers' tales,' and the Arab horses are better than the English, I don't wonder the Arabs have never showed any inclination for the civilization of Europe; with such horses, they can want nothing more."

"WAS NOT THAT THUNDER?"

One of the finest spectacles presented by the summer solstice, is a sudden thunder-storm, particularly when witnessed from an elevated point, commanding an extensive view. There is music, as well as scenery—the crashing boom of the heavy peals that reverberate among the hills, like the echoes of the bombardment of Sebastopol. Then the pouring rain, descending in torrents, flooding the parched earth, and drenching the heavy foliage, is an additional circumstance of interest, and when the drama winds up with a sudden outburst of gorgeous sunshine, with a rainbow spanning the retiring storm, the beholder feels that there is scarcely an episode in the story of natural phenomena more magnificent.

OUR SPANISH RELATIONS.—Mr. Dodge, our Minister to Spain, met with a very cordial reception at court, and every possible civility has been extended to him in Madrid. We know not how much of this politeness is owing to the outshot of his predecessor, who introduced the pistol into diplomacy with great effect, as Mr. Turgot's lame leg testifies to this day. Mr. Soule certainly made a hit then, and perhaps the Spaniards think that our present minister will not *dodge* the duello. An ambassador who deals in bullets as well as bulletins must be civilly treated.

BITUMINOUS COAL.—The bituminous coal trade of Pennsylvania has, for years past, been growing up into importance, though, as the energies of Philadelphia have been chiefly devoted to the anthracite trade, the progress in the bituminous mines has been but little known. The extended railroad facilities have now brought this coal into notice, and during the last year over 600,000 tons were shipped from Philadelphia.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL.—The ninth volume of this illustrated magazine—the pride of the Union—begins with the first of July. The present is universally acknowledged to be the best volume of the paper yet published. The paper is of the finest quality, and the engravings of the most elegant and expensive description. Compare the present volume with the preceding ones and note the vast improvements. Still greater things now be expected in the forthcoming volume. No drawing-room or parlor is complete where the "Pictorial" is not a visitant.—*Washington Ed's Chronicle and Advocate.*

THE RAVELS.—The Gabriel Ravel Troupe are more popular than ever. At the Metropolitan Theatre, Buffalo, where they played just before coming to the Howard, they attracted larger audiences than had ever before filled the establishment. It requires a very cultivated taste to appreciate Shaksperare, but everybody can understand ground and lofty tumbling.

HORRIBLE.—A man named Evans in Cairo, Illinois, was lately bitten by a mad dog; during his paroxysms, five men could not hold him; he was placed at his own request between two feather beds and smothered to death.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL
DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION.
[LATE GLEASON'S PICTORIAL.]

For the present week embraces the following contents:
"The Baron de Dieser," a tale, by CHAS. A. HOWARD.
"Dolls are Dangerous," a story, by SARAH H. BENDIXEN.
"The Fine Dress," a legend of the Tunas of Missouri, by RAY. PERLEY BROOK.
"On a small Landscape," stanzas by PARK BENJAMIN.
"To Lewis," a poem.
"An Angel in the Air," verses, by GEORGE W. BUNGAY.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

We give another design of our chronicles of the States, representing the State Arms and Armorial devices of Missouri.
View of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.
Map of the Sandwich Islands.
View of an English steamer making the Harbor of Boulogne.
Representation of a Tower in Boulogne.
Scene at the Mouth of the Liane, Boulogne.
A series of views on our Atlantic coast, in the vicinity of Boston; giving first, a picture of Egg Rock, as seen from Phillips Beach; second, view of Swampscott, residence of Mr. Mudge, Lynn, near Swampscott; fourth, a characteristic scene at Phillips Beach; and, sixth, residence of Mr Bates, Swampscott.
Portrait of Hiram Fuller, Editor of New York Mirror.
Representation of a Turkish Column of Soldiers on the March to the Crimea.
A whole page picture, giving likelike portraits of distinguished English, Paris, Turkish and Russian Officers engaged in the war in the Crimea.

⁂ The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

Foreign Items.

It is said that the day officially fixed for Queen Victoria's visit to Paris is August 13.

Abd el-Kader has accompanied his mother and his wife as far as Constantinople, on the way to Mexico, on a pilgrimage.

A proposal for a general and permanent encampment on Salisbury Plain has been addressed to Lord Panmure.

A sea eagle, weighing 6lb. 2oz., was killed by a gamekeeper, on Berwyn mountain, in Wales, a short time since.

The Germanic Diet has rejected the proposal from Prussia for the suppression of gaming carried on in most of the German watering places.

Lieutenant Augustus C. Murray, R. N., has accepted the command of a troop of horse artillery in the Turkish contingent force.

The imperial Brazilian decree for the construction of a railway in Bahia has arrived in England. The maximum capital on which a premium is at present guaranteed is £1,800,000.

The mortality in the Austrian army in Gallicia is so great that the bodies are no longer buried separately, but in large pits. About 14,000 men have died, and 23,000 are in the hospitals.

General David Khan, a native of Persia, who filled the office of First Interpreter at the Persian Court, is at present in Vienna. He has embraced the Christian religion, and is about to marry a Vienna lady.

A gentleman of the name of Delle Case has just died at Naples, leaving a million of francs as a fund for the relief of poor workmen unable from sickness or other causes to maintain their families.

The ground left disposable by the demolition of the buildings of the Temple, in Paris, is to be tran-formed into a public garden in the English style, in the centre of which will be erected a monument to Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette.

During the year 1854, 388,714 cwt. of foreign cheese was imported into the United Kingdom. Of this 349,000 came from other parts of Europe; 38,987 cwt. from the United States, and 30 cwt. from British possessions abroad.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

When men will not be reasoned out of a vanity, they must be ridiculed out of it.

A man is looked upon to be a stranger to all that he affects.

Emulation is a noble passion, as it strives to excel by raising itself, and not by depressing others.

The conqueror is regarded with awe, the wise man commands our esteem; but it is the benevolent man we too wins our affections.

The man who threatens the world, is always ridiculous; for the world can easily go on without him, and in short time will cease to miss him.

In order to establish themselves in the world, men do all they can to appear established there. Goldsmith declares: "If a man wishes to become rich, he must appear to be rich."

It is according to nature, to be merciful: for no man that hath not divested himself of humanity, can be hard hearted to others, without feeling a pain in himself.

Bad conduct results, for the most part, from mistaking our calling. There are so many fools and knaves, because there are so few men who know themselves. The question is not to discover what will suit us, but for what we are suited.

It is not high crimes, such as robberies and murder, which destroy the peace of society, but the village gossip, family quarrels, jealousies and bickerings between neighbours—meddlesomeness and tattling, which are the worms that eat into all social happiness.

Joker's Budget.

Reform is an omnibus that's always "just going to start."

Mr. Jenkins says he has a house to let—wants the rowdy boys to let it alone. Jenkins is right. "Them boys," says Jenkins, "is rascally."

The best stick a man can carry about him, is a stick to business. By two years, and report the result in a lily-leaf of a next year's almanac.

A vender of quack nostrums inscribed on his window pane—"Don't confound this shop with another quack's on the opposite side."

A traveller, about to start on a journey through a country infested by robbers, took the precaution of putting a brace of Colt's revolvers at the bottom of his trunk!

"This is a free country," shouted an English soldier at Inkerman. "I have a prisoner." "Well, bring him here." "I should like to do it—but the scoundrel wont let me go."

"Sir," said a man, "I am a prisoner of a magistrate," "any right to commit a nuisance?" "No sir, not even the Mayor." "Then, sir, I claim my liberty. I was arrested as a nuisance, and as no one has a right to commit me I move for a nonsuit."

A little fellow, weeping piteously, was interrupted by some sympathizers. He hushed his cries a moment, but was a struggle between smiles and tears; the train of thought was broken. "Ma," said he, resuming his studies and wishing to have his cry out, "Ma—sigh! sigh! *asked* was *I crying about just now?*"

A young gentleman who wished to send his likeness to a young lady whose parents had forbidden him the house and, who of course, would object to her having his miniature, directed the artist "to take his likeness, but in such a way that nobody should recognize it." Miss painters can do that.

Quill and Scissors.

A correspondent of the Prairie Farmer, who was much annoyed by rats, tried shooting, poisoning, and everything he could think of, but they defied the whole of egery. He then heard that they would not remain where Guinea fowls were kept, and now he says that for over two years he has neither seen nor heard a rat about the premises.

There has been a company of colored men organized in militia in Providence, R. I., and the Legislature has granted them the use of the State arms. During the Revolution, Rhode Island furnished a large number of regiments, who were excellent soldiers. Many attempts have been made to organize a company of blacks, but never with success.

A Mr. Brooks recently made a balloon ascension from New Orleans. He landed on Gaborre Island, in the Mississippi river, in a cornfield, where some farmers were at work, who were terror-stuck at the appearance of the man from the skies. Mr. Brooks had to pass the night near the place of his descent, and was nearly starved to death and eaten up by mosquitoes.

The Albany papers mention the arrival in that city of a drove of Texas beeves, which came all the way from their south western grazing grounds by steam, and which were in prime slaughtering condition. This is a novel exemplification of the benefits of railroads and steamboats.

A contract for railroad iron has been made by Prof Garland, president of the Northwest and Southwest Alabama Railroad. The iron is to be manufactured along the line of the road, and is to be furnished at the rate of $40 per ton. So says the Tuscaloosa Observer.

Dr. Sanborn, of Andover, recommends a resort to the nearest pump as a remedy for the toothache, where extraction is impracticable. He says that by making cold applications to parts nearest the offending member, probably in less than an hour the pain would be gone.

The Baltimore American says, that the shot tower in that city has had for some months, a large force employed in the manufacture of bullets. As there is no special home demand for them in this country, the probability is that they are destined for the Crimea.

Mr. Tolleck Bronbeck, of Newburyport, quite recently, fell head foremost from the mainmast head of a schooner, a distance of 65 feet. Catching in the rigging, he managed to turn himself "right side up," and alighted "with care," and uninjured.

Great excitement exists at Belvidere, Illinois, in consequence of a wild man, almost in a state of nudity, having been discovered in a grove near that place. He is supposed to be a man named Mellon (not the Dr.), who recently became insane and fled from his family in Chicago.

The Amenia Times (N. Y.), states that A. Hotchkiss, of Sharon Valley, Conn., has invented a new kind of ball for rifled cannon, which is to overcome all the difficulties hitherto experienced in rifled cannon for firing iron balls.

At Saratoga Springs, a rocket was prematurely fired on the evening of the Fourth, and passed through a crowd of spectators, setting fire to a lady's dress, and tearing off portions of the clothing of Hon. Wm. Appleton, of this city.

The fisheries on the Merrimac have failed almost entirely this year, the dams across the river having prevented an impassable barrier to the progress of the fish in their annual migration up the stream.

Pulmonary consumption, the great scourge of our northern climate, is disarmed of half its terrors since we have a remedy so singularly efficacious as Wistar's Balsam of Wild Cherry. It is worthy of the high reputation which it enjoys.

The reporter of the N. Y. Times went to a hop the other night, and in his rose leaf, sky-blue account, says there was not a homely face, an ugly foot, or a vulgar waist present.

Mr. Fillmore is puffed to "the third degree" by the London Court Journal. His pants and vest, worn upon the occasion of his visit to the Queen, were much admired.

Mr. Crampton, the British minister at Washington, has taken umbrage at the administration for preventing the departure of the recruits for the Crimea.

The first steamboat ever built on the waters of the Western Missouri, launched at Kansas city, is called the "Kansas City," and is intended for the Kansas river trade.

The liquor dealers of New York propose to start a newspaper organ in that city, on the model of the London Times, with a capital of $100,000.

Brooks, the celebrated aeronaut, was to have ascended from Chicago on the 4th of July, in his mammoth balloon "Eclipse."

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Stowe, Mr. Charles M. Whittemore to Miss Mary E. F. Metivier, both of Boston. Mr. James C. Johnson to Miss Margaret Archibald, both of Portland.

By Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. George W. Ashmun to Miss Sarah A. Ellis.

By Rev. Mr. Craft, Mr. Elbridge G. Locke to Miss Helen S. Muldoon, of Lexington.

By Rev. Dr. Stowe, Mr. David Henshaw Ward, of West Newton, to Miss Julia Frances Noble.

By Rev. Mr. Kirk, Mr. John Drummond to Miss Margaret J. Mattison.

By Rev. Mr. Howe, Mr. James Hall to Miss Elizabeth W. Fudge, both of Boston.

By Rev. Mr. Rice, Mr. Lewis Hayden to Miss Laura A. Morrill, both of Lawrence.

By Rev. Mr. Twombly, Mr. Isaac D. McIntosh, of Dedham, to Miss Rebecca D. Babcock.

At Charlestown, by Rev. Mr. Mudge, Mr. D. Jernald to Miss Mary A. Wright.

At Chelsea, by Rev. Mr. Mason, Mr. Henry K. Hall to Miss Elizabeth B. Bryant.

At Cambridgeport, by Rev. Mr. Ware, Mr. Silas H. Loring, of Worcester, to Miss Carrie B. Hyde.

At Worcester, by Rev. Mr. Hill, Mr. Lorenzo C. Andrews to Miss Sarah S. Wright, both of Boston.

At New Bedford, by Rev. Mr. Bradford, Mr. Nathaniel Little to Miss Maria J. Lawrence.

At Hyannis, Capt. William T. Becket, of Boston, to Miss Mary B. Hallet.

At Dayton, Ohio, by Rev. Mr. Tindell, Mr. Charles M. Miles, of Worcester, Mass., to Miss Mary R. Holden.

Deaths.

In this city, Mrs Martha W. Cobb, 49; Anna Fillebrown 62, Freddy B., only son of Benjamin F. and Adeline Talbot, 11 months.

At South Boston, Mrs. Rebecca L. Jacobs, 64.

At Medford, Miss Ellen Maria Bailey, 30.

At Woburn, Mrs. Hannah Plympton, 69.

At Waltham, Mrs. Abigail Shipley, 76.

At Hingham, Mr. Caleb Gill, 81.

At East Walpole, Mrs. Nancy Tapley, 79, widow of the late Isaac Tapley, of Charlestown.

At Salem, Miss Rebecca C. Bendixen, 26.

At Manchester, Capt. David Woodbury, 61.

At Lowell, Desire Howett, daughter of Mr. Stephen Cumming, 14.

At Auburn, Mr. Appollos Follett, 75.

At Taunton, Mr. John Stanley of Norton, 82.

At Worcester, Marianna, wife of H. Walford Jenny, 23.

At North Bridgfield, Mr. Peary Hale, 86.

At Springfield, Mr. J. W. Fiocka, 46.

At Pittsfield, Mrs. Dorothy Bullerfin, 57.

At Lenox, Mr. James Crosby, 58.

At Appleton, Mr. Stanbert Hing, of New Bedford, 46.

At Chilmark, Mrs. Persis Look, 80.

At North Springfield, Vt., Mrs. Mary Chase, 90.

At South Berwick, Me., Mr. John Stocker, 75.

At New Orleans, at the Arcade Hotel, Capt. C. A. Clemens, a native of Belfast, Me.

At Edwardsburg, Canada, Margaret McCrea Macintosh, 100.

At Compton, Canada East, Mr. Thomas Paige, 63.

On board ship Nassau, of New Bedford, near the Lagrove Islands, of typhoid fever, James H. Weeks.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

NATURAL CURLS.

BY ESTHER B. STRATTON.

What a rumble and a fumble,
What a merry, merry tumble
All the fairies seem to share!
What a bumping and a thumping,
What a jolly, joyous jumping
In a curly head of hair!

What a flying and a hieing,
What a tiny tact for eyeing
Through the glossy curls so fair;
What a flutter and a blunder,
What a happy little plunder
In a curly head of hair.

What a fluting and a hooting,
What a charming chance for shooting
For young Cupid there;
What a training and a gaining,
What a group of arrows aiming
Through the curly locks of hair.

What a tumbling and a fumbling,
What a wondrous little rumbling
Of voices in the air;
What a riding and a chiding,
What a funny place for hiding
In a curly head of hair!

What a flinging and a ringing,
What a sound of merry singing,
All away from care;
What a *nesting*, what a *resting*,
For fairies to be blest in,
In a curly head of hair.

[Translated from the French for The Flag of our Union.]

A RUSSIAN HOUSEHOLD.

BY ANNE T. WILBUR.

I LIKE much the modest and solitary life of those country proprietors, who are called in Little Russia the *old time people* (starosvetskie); they are like those picturesque old cottages, which please you by their simplicity, and by the contrast which they present to modern, neat, elegant dwellings, whose walls do not yet bear the traces of ruin, whose roofs are not yet covered with greenish moss, and whose steps, newly painted, do not yet show the red bricks. I love to descend sometimes, for an instant, into the sphere of this life, so calm and peaceful, where no desire has ever passed the hedge which encloses the little court and orchard, surrounded with wooden cottages, leaning on one side, and lost in a thicket of willows, elders and pear-trees. The life of their inhabitants is so tranquil that one forgets himself with them for an instant, and is ready to think that the passions, the vain desires, all the children of the evil spirit which trouble this world, have no existence, and have appeared to him only in a painful and agitated dream. I see now the little dwellings, surrounded by a gallery, supported by some slender columns of blackened wood, and which makes the entire circuit of the building, in order that one may, during a storm, close the blinds without being wet by the rain; behind the house, some mulberry-trees in flower, then long rows of little fruit trees, drowned in the lively scarlet of cherries and in a bluish sea of downy plums; then a large and old beech, beneath the shade of which lies spread out a carpet for repose; before the house, a spacious court of short and verdant grass, with two little paths which lead from the barn to the kitchen, and from the kitchen to the dwelling of the proprietor; a long-necked goose, drinking water from a pool, surrounded by her goslings, of a tender and silken yellow; a hedge, on which hang strings of dried apples and pears, and carpets put out to air; a cart laden with melons, near the barn; an ox, unyoked and ruminating idly, lying beside it. All this has for me an inexpressible charm; perhaps because I shall never more see this sight, and everything from which we are separated becomes dear. For whatever reason, as soon as my briska approached the steps of this house, my soul experienced a delicious sentiment of calmness and happiness. The horses trotted gaily to the door, where they stopped of themselves; the coachman slowly descended from his seat, and began to fill his pipe, as if he were before his own house. Even the phlegmatic barking of the dogs of the poultry-yard had something of amicable and benevolent. But what pleased me most in this modest retreat, was the proprietors—good old people, who hastened to greet their guests with so much cordiality. Their kind faces are sometimes present to my mind, even amid the tumult of the world, and a pleasant reverie seizes me, as I recall the past. There was so much kindness, frankness and benevolence on their countenances, that one joyfully renounced, as least for a few moments, every rash thought, and insensibly became entirely absorbed in this humble, rural life.

I cannot forget those two old people of the past century; they are now no longer in the world; but my soul is filled with pious sadness as I think that I may one day visit their habitation, now deserted, that I shall find the house half ruined, the garden forsaken, and the pond changed into a marsh. Yes, I am sad only to think of it. But let us commence our narrative.

Athanasius Ivanovitch Tovstogoub and Pulcheria Ivanovna Tovstogoublikha,* as the peasants of the country called them, were the two old people of whom I have just spoken. If I were a painter, and wished to represent Philemon and Baucis, they should be my models. Athanasius Ivanovitch was sixty years old—Pulcheria Ivanovna, fifty-five. Athanasius was of tall stature; he wore constantly a little pelisse of sheepskin (*touloup*), covered with camlet; he loved to sit in a stooping posture, and smiled always, whether he was telling a story himself or listening to another. Pulcheria, on the contrary, was serious, and seldom laughed. But there was so much benevolence in her eyes, and on her whole countenance, one read there so clearly the pleasure which she experienced in giving you the best she had, that is seemed as if one smile more would have rendered her physiognomy too insipid. The wrinkles of their countenances were disposed so gracefully that a painter might have copied them with profit. It seemed as if one might read there all their honest and quiet lives, a life such as is led by the good, ancient families of Little Russia, which forms the most striking contrast with those vile, Little Russians, who, from pedlers and tar merchants, as they were, become employees of the state, jump like grasshoppers into all the offices of the courts of justice, wrest the last *kopek* from their own countrymen, accumulate a capital, and solemnly add to the terminating *o* of their family names, the letter *w*, to make of it a Russian name. No, my two old people did not resemble those despicable creatures, any more than do other august families found in Little Russia.

They had never had any children, so that their affection was concentrated on each other. In his youth, Athanasius Ivanovitch had served in the army; but that had been so long, long ago, that he never alluded to it himself. Athanasius Ivanovitch had married at the age of thirty, when he was still a handsome youth, and wore a short, embroidered pelisse. He had even carried off, with much address, Pulcheria Ivanovna, whose parents did not wish him for a son-in-law. But he scarcely remembered this adventure; at least, he never spoke of it. To all these ancient and extraordinary events had long since succeeded a peaceful, retired life, and sweet and solitary reveries, like those which surprise you when you are seated on a terrace commanding a garden, while a fruitful summer rain is falling in large drops on the leaves of the trees, forming at their feet little rivulets, whose murmur invites to sleep; and the rainbow, gliding above the foliage, spreads over the sky its pale shades; or when, cradled in a carriage, which is passing between tall, green bushes, amid the wild and noisy cries of the quails of the steppes, your hands and face are brushed by the ears of high grain, and the stems of large wild flowers that thrust themselves into the carriage by scaling its doors.

Athanasius Ivanovitch listened with a gracious smile to those who came to visit him; he interrogated others rather than talked himself, and was not one of those old men who weary you by praising the past and abusing the present. In his questions he seemed to take a great interest in all the circumstances of your own life, in your successes and your reverses, although the curiosity of these good, old people resembled that of a child which, while you are speaking, examines with profound attention the seal of your watch. Then, it might be said, that his face breathed benevolence. The rooms of the little dwelling occupied by the old couple, were small and low, as usual in the houses of olden time. In each room was an immense stove, which filled almost a third of it. The house was extremely warm, for Athanasius Ivanovitch loved heat. All the doors of the stoves terminated in the ante-chamber, constantly filled with straw, which, in Little Russia, is used for fuel, instead of wood. The clear and sparkling fire of the straw rendered this ante-chamber very agreeable in winter, when a young and ardent boy, shivering, after having escorted home some village girl, entered there, clapping his hands to warm them. The walls of the principal rooms were adorned with some pictures and engravings, enclosed in old, narrow frames. I am sure that the masters of the house were themselves for a long time ignorant of what these represented, and would not even have perceived it if some of them had been carried away. There were, among others, two large portraits, painted in oil; one represented an archbishop, the other, Peter III. Among the engravings was a Duchess de Valliere, all soiled with the flies. Around the windows and doors were fastened other little black engravings, which were not often examined, for they were taken for spots on the wall. The floor, in all the rooms, was of clay, but very well built, and so neat that no parquet of a great nobleman, lazily swept by a half-awake gentleman in livery, could bear a comparison with it. The chamber of Pulcheria Ivanovna was full of trunks and boxes. A quantity of bags, full of flower seeds, melon and cucumber seeds, were suspended to the walls. All the intervals and corners, formed by the piles of trunks, were encumbered with skeins of wool, rags, fripperies dating from a half century. Pulcheria Ivanovna was a great housekeeper; she picked up everything, often without knowing herself what she intended to do with it.

But the most remarkable thing about the house was the creaking of the doors. From early morning they resounded all over the house. I do not know why the doors creaked thus. Was it because the hinges were rusty?—or had the joiner, who made them, concealed in them some secret mechanism? I do not know; but the strangest thing was, that each door had its particular sound. That of the bedroom had a sharp and shrill voice; that of the dining-room, a low and hoarse voice. As for that of the ante-chamber, it gave out a singular, treacherous and plaintive sound; so that on listening attentively, one could easily distinguish these words: "I am cold, I am cold, I am freezing!" I know that many persons do not like the creaking of a door; but I like it much. And when in St. Petersburg I sometimes hear a door creak, I transport myself in idea to the country, to a little low room, lighted by a lamp placed in an old chandelier. The supper is already on the table, near the open window, through which a beautiful May night looks into the room; a nightingale fills with his notes the garden, the house, and the whole space to the river, which lies expanded in the distance; the trees rustle faintly. What a long train of memories pass before my imagination!

The chairs of the old household were of wood, and massive; they had all very high backs, without paint or varnish. They were not even stuffed, and resembled the seats of our archbishops. Some little tables in the corners; other square tables before the sofa and before the glass, surrounded with a frame of gilt foliage; a carpet, with birds which resembled flowers, and flowers which resembled birds; this was all the furniture of the cottage, occupied by my old couple. The chamber of the servants was always full of young and old maidens, in striped dresses. Pulcheria Ivanovna gave them sometimes some trifles to sew, or fruits to clean. Most of them slept in the kitchen. Pulcheria Ivanovna thought it necessary to keep all under the key of the house, and maintain a careful watch over their habits. On the window-panes an immense quantity of flies are constantly buzzing, and amid their confused noise might be sometimes heard the grave hum of a hornet, or the sharper note of a wasp. But as soon as the lights were brought, all this host went to sleep, and covered the ceiling with a dense black cloud.

Athanasius Ivanovitch occupied himself very little with business. Sometimes he went to visit in the fields his mowers and harvesters, and watched them with attentive curiosity. All the weight of the domestic administration rested on Pulcheria Ivanovna; which consisted in opening and shutting perpetually the provision-room, in cooking, drying and preserving all sorts of fruits and vegetables. Her house resembled the laboratory of a chemist. There was always a fire lighted under an apple-tree in the garden; an iron tripod bore a copper saucepan, in which were incessantly cooking comfits, jellies and *pastilas* (a species of conserves) of sugar and honey. Under some other tree, a coachman was occupied in distilling brandy from peach leaves, mulberry blossoms and cherry-stones; and at the end of the operation, he could not move his tongue—or rather he said such foolish things that Pulcheria Ivanovna, unable to comprehend anything, sent him to sleep in the kitchen. Such a quantity of articles were cooked, dried and preserved, that they would have at last inundated the attics and cellars; for Pulcheria Ivanovna loved to make provisions far beyond their necessities—if the greater part of these delicacies had not been devoured by the servants, who once introduced into the pantry, stuffed themselves to such a degree that they groaned all the rest of the day with the stomach-ache.

Pulcheria Ivanovna could not enter into the details of the management of the land; the intendant, in league with the *starosta* (the chief of the peasants—himself a peasant), pillaged her in a pitiless manner. They were in the habit of cutting in the forest of their lord as though it had been their own; they caused to be constructed a multitude of sledges, which they sent to the nearest fair to be sold; they also sold the large oaks to the joiners of the village. Once, only, Pulcheria Ivanovna expressed a desire to inspect her forest. They harnessed an old, ancient *droschki*, enveloped in enormous leather aprons, and which, as soon as the coachman agitated his lips to start the old horses, who had served in the militia, began to fill the air with strange noises. One heard suddenly the sound of a flute, or a tamborine; every nail, in fact, every screw resounded so, that when the lady left the chateau, it was heard at the mill at two verst's distance. Pulcheria Ivanovna could not fail to perceive the extermination of her forest, and the removal of the oaks which in her youth she had known as already venerable.

"Why, then, Nitchipor," said she to her intendant, who accompanied her; "why have those oaks become so scarce? Take care that your locks become not as scarce."

"Why scarce?" replied the intendant; "they have disappeared, entirely disappeared. Some have been struck by lightning, others eaten by worms; in fine, they have disappeared, madam; they have disappeared."

Pulcheria Ivanovna was completely satisfied with this reply; and on her return to the house, only gave orders to watch with redoubled care over the Spanish cherry-trees, and the great winter pear trees. Her worthy administrators, the intendant and the starosta, found afterwards that it was entirely useless to bring all the flour to the granaries of their lords, and that the latter might well be satisfied with half. They ended by choosing this half from the spoiled or mouldy flour, which was refused at the fair. But notwithstanding the bold thefts of these two rogues, notwithstanding the voracity of all the inhabitants of the house, from the housekeeper down to the pigs, who devoured a multitude of plums and apples, shaking the trees with their snouts to bring down a shower of fruit; notwithstanding the pillage of the sparrows and crows, notwithstanding the presents made to their relatives and acquaintances by the servants, who carried the effrontery so far as to steal pieces of linen, the price of which was spent at the cabaret; notwithstanding the plunder of visitors, phlegmatic coachmen and idle lackeys, Athanasius Ivanovitch and Pulcheria Ivanovna had so few wants, that all these depredations occasioned no diminution of their comfort.

This good old couple, after the habit of the old-time people, were somewhat fond of the pleasures of the table. As soon as the dawn appeared,—they always rose early,—they seated themselves at the table, and took their coffee. After this first repast, Athanasius Ivanovitch would go out on the doorstep, and cry out, brandishing his handkerchief like a whip:

"*Kich! kich!* away geese—away from here."

Usually he met his intendant in the middle of the court. He was accustomed to enter into conversation with him, interrogate him in detail on the labors of the fields, and communicate to him remarks or give orders, such that every one would have been surprised at his profound acquaintance with domestic economy, and a novice would not even have thought that one could rob a master so clear-sighted. But his intendant was an old fox, who knew very well how to reply, and better still what to do. Afterwards, Athanasius Ivanovitch would recount his apartment, and say, approaching Pulcheria Ivanovna:

"Say, then, Pulcheria Ivanovna, it is time perhaps to eat a morsel."

"But, Athanasius Ivanovitch, what can we eat now?—unless perhaps it be some little ham pies, pickled poppy-seeds or mushrooms."

"Let us have the pickled mushrooms and the little pies," replied Athanasius Ivanovitch.

And immediately the table was covered with little pies and mushrooms.

An hour before dinner, Athanasius Ivanovitch breakfasted again, took a glass of brandy in an ancient silver cup, and helped down the brandy by swallowing mushrooms, dried fish, and some other trifles. They dined at noon. Besides the plates and sauce-dishes, the table was loaded with a quantity of little pots, hermetically sealed, in order that the appetizing productions of the kitchen might not evaporate. At table, the conversation turned habitually on subjects intimately connected with the grand affair of the dinner.

"It seems to me that these groats are a little burnt," Athanasius Ivanovitch would say; "what do you think of it, Pulcheria Ivanovna?"

"No, Athanasius Ivanovitch; put a little more butter in them; that will take out the burnt taste, and pour upon them a little mushroom sauce."

"So be it," replied Athanasius Ivanovitch, passing his plate to her; "let us see what the result will be."

After dinner Athanasius Ivanovitch would go to rest for an hour; then Pulcheria Ivanovna would bring him a watermelon, and say:

"See how good this watermelon is, Athanasius Ivanovitch."

"Do not trust too much to its beautiful red color, Pulcheria Ivanovna," replied Athanasius Ivanovitch, taking a large slice; "some red ones are good for nothing."

Meanwhile the watermelon quickly disappeared. Afterwards, Athanasius Ivanovitch ate some pears, and went to make a tour of the garden with Pulcheria Ivanovna. Returned to the house, the good lady attended to her affairs, and the husband, seating himself under the awning of a balcony, which looked out upon the court, amused himself in watching the provision-room as it displayed and concealed its interior; and the servants, jostling each other as they carried to and fro a heap of old rubbish, thrown pell-mell into the trunks, baskets and sieves. A little while afterwards, he sends for Pulcheria Ivanovna, or rather goes in search of her himself, and says to her:

"What is there to eat, Pulcheria Ivanovna?"

"I do not know," replied she, "unless I order some gooseberry cakes, which I have kept on purpose for you."

"Let us have the gooseberry cakes," replies Athanasius Ivanovitch.

"Perhaps you would prefer a little *kissel*?"*

"That, indeed, would not be bad," replies Athanasius Ivanovitch.

And immediately the cakes and the kissel are brought, and disappear together. Before supper, Athanasius Ivanovitch makes another little collation. At half past nine supper was served. Immediately after, they retired to rest, and the most profound tranquillity reigned in this little corner of the earth, at once so active and so quiet. The chamber where Pulcheria Ivanovna slept, was so warm that few persons could have remained many hours there; but Athanasius Ivanovitch, in order to be still warmer, slept on a Russian stove (built of bricks, in a square or oblong form), whose high temperature sometimes forced him to rise during the night, and walk about the room. As he walks about thus, he utters little moans.

"What are you groaning about?" asks Pulcheria Ivanovna.

"God knows," replied he; "I think I have a slight stomach-ache."

"Perhaps you could eat something, Athanasius Ivanovitch?"

"I do not know whether it would be good for me, Pulcheria Ivanovna; but what is there to eat?"

"Some curdled milk or dried pears."

"Well, let us try them."

A servant, half asleep, goes to search in the closet; Athanasius Ivanovitch eats a plate full, after which he says:

"It seems to me that I am a little better."

Sometimes, when the weather was pleasant, and the apartment very warm, Athanasius Ivanovitch would become gay and amuse himself with joking Pulcheria Ivanovna a little.

"Say, then, Pulcheria Ivanovna, if our house should burn down, what would become of us?"

"God forbid!" Pulcheria Ivanovna would reply, making the sign of the cross.

"But suppose our house should be burned, where should we lodge?"

"Well, we should go into the kitchen; you could take the little chamber occupied by the housekeeper."

"But if the kitchen should burn also?"

"God preserve us from such a misfortune as that the house and the kitchen should burn at the same time! Well, we would occupy the store-house until we had time to build anew."

"But if our store house should burn also?"

"God knows what you say! I will not listen to you any longer. It is a sin to say such things, and God will punish us for such wicked thoughts."

And Athanasius Ivanovitch, satisfied with having teased Pulcheria Ivanovna, sits smilingly in his chair.

Those good people pleased me especially when they received visits. Then, everything about the house were a different aspect. They lived only, so to speak, for the guests. They brought forward everything they had of the best; they offered eagerly all their land products. And what touched me most was, that in this eagerness there was nothing affected. The satisfaction they experienced in loading you with their offers was so clearly painted on their countenances, that it was almost impossible to refuse them. No visitor was ever permitted to depart on the same day of his arrival. He was absolutely constrained to pass the night.

"How can one set out so late to go so far?" Pulcheria Ivanovna would say on these occasions—remember that the visitor usually lived at the distance of three or four versts.

"Certainly," Athanasius Ivanovitch would add, "one cannot foresee what might happen. You might be attacked by robbers, or meet many other annoyances."

"God keep us from robbers!" Pulcheria Ivanovna would say. "Why tell such stories when it is almost night? There are no robbers to be afraid of, but the weather is unpleasant, and it is not well to travel. And then your coachman. I know your coachman; he is so small, so feeble. And then I am sure that he has been taking too much wine, and is asleep in a corner."

And the visitor was compelled to remain. But the evening, spent in a small, well-warmed room, a conversation, friendly, gentle, tranquillizing and disposing to slumber, the appetizing odor of the supper, all these paid largely for the obligingness of the visitor. I can seem to see Athanasius Ivanovitch, stooping in his chair, and listening, with a perpetual smile on his lips, to the discourse of his guest, not only with attention, but with genuine enjoyment. The visitor who has himself rarely quitted his country-house, makes a multitude of political suppositions, relates with a terrified air and a mysterious expression, that the French and English have secretly concerted to send Bonaparte to Russia again, and begins to discourse on the war which is about to break out. Then Athanasius Ivanovitch says, pretending not to look at Pulcheria Ivanovna:

"I have myself the intention of going to the war. Why should I not go to the war?"

"Let us see you go," exclaimed Pulcheria Ivanovna. "Do not believe a word he says," she would add, addressing the stranger. "How could he, old as he is, go to war? The first soldier he met would kill him—yes, would certainly kill him. He would aim at him and kill him."

"Or rather," Athanasius Ivanovitch would reply, "I should kill him."

"Hear what he says," Pulcheria Ivanovna would resume. "How can he go to the war? His pistols have long been rusty, and burnished to the garret. If you could see them! They would certainly burst, and wound his hands or face; he would be disfigured the rest of his days."

"Well," Athanasius Ivanovitch would say, "I will buy new arms; I will take a sabre, or a Cossack lance."

"This is all folly," Pulcheria Ivanovna would reply, with some vexation. "I know very well that he is joking; but it is disagreeable to hear it. One listens, and ends by being afraid."

And Athanasius Ivanovitch, contented with having frightened Pulcheria Ivanovna a little, sits smilingly in his chair.

I loved also to watch Pulcheria Ivanovna when she was inviting a visitor to breakfast.

"Here," she would say, taking the stopple from a decanter; "here is some brandy made with mint; it is very good for weakness. And here is some prepared with centaury; this is very efficacious for a buzzing in the ears, or pimples on the face. Here is some made of peach-stones; take a little glass of it; see what a good flavor it has. If any one, on riding in the morning from bed, should hit his forehead against the corner of a wardrobe, and make a bunch there, he has but to take a little glass of it before dinner, and all would pass away as if he had never been struck."

It was thus that she recommended all her liquors, which had each some curative virtue. After having introduced her guest to all this pharmacy, she would conduct him to a table, laden with a quantity of little dishes.

"Here are some peppered mushrooms; others prepared with cloves, and some filberts; it was a Turkish woman who taught me to preserve them, when we had Turkish prisoners. She was indeed a very good woman, and one could not perceive, the least in the world, that she was of the Turkish religion. She did everything as we did; only she abstained from eating pork, saying that it was forbidden by her laws. Here are some mushrooms preserved in currant and Muscat wine; here are others which I have pickled for the first time. I do not know whether they are good. Father Ivan taught me how to do them. You must take a little barrel; put in it first some oak leaves, then pepper and saltpetre, then some flowers of *nitchnitcebr* (an odoriferous plant of the steppes), with their stems uppermost. Here are some little cheese-cakes; here are others of buckwheat, of which Athanasius Ivanovitch is very fond."

"Yes," Athanasius Ivanovitch would add, "I like them much; they are tender and a little tart."

In general, Pulcheria Ivanovna was in very good humor when her house was full of company. But my narrative now approaches a very sad event, which changed forever the life and habits of this tranquil retreat. It will seem extraordinary when it is seen what a trifling occurrence produced it. Imperceptible causes often bring about great events, while vast enterprises terminate in insignificant results.

Pulcheria Ivanovna had a little gray cat almost always at her feet, rolled up like a ball. It could not be said that Pulcheria was very fond of this cat, but she was attached to it by seeing it constantly. Athanasius Ivanovitch often rallied her on this affection.

"I do not know," he would say to her, "what you can find to like in a cat. Of what use is it? Ah! if you had a dog it would be another affair. A dog can hunt; but a cat!"

"Hush, hush, Athanasius Ivanovitch," she would reply, "you are very fond of talking. A dog is not neat; a dog breaks and spoils everything; but a cat is a quiet creature, which harms no one."

As for that, Athanasius Ivanovitch cared little for dog or cat. He said this only to tease his better half.

Behind the garden was a great forest, which the speculating intendant had entirely spared, doubtless because the noise of the hatchet there would have reached the ears of Pulcheria Ivanovna. This forest remained abandoned, wild, tangled, and the old trunks of the trees were adorned with young shoots. It was inhabited by wild cats, whose mewing is harsh and hoarse; ful; they make subterraneous holes to penetrate pantries, and steal pieces of pork. They even introduce themselves by the windows into kitchens, when they perceive the absence of the cook. The good little cat of Pulcheria Ivanovna was

*It is known that Ivanovitch and Ivanovna mean son of Ivan and daughter of Ivan. In Russia, these patronymic names, formed by the Christian name of the father, are inseparable from the Christian name of the persons who bears them, and serve clearer to designate them than their family names.

*A kind of fruit jelly.

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allured into the forest by these marauders. Three days had passed away since her disappearance, and her mistress, who had sought her everywhere, had at last forgotten her. Having one day inspected her vegetable garden, she was returning to the house, carrying some green cucumbers which she had gathered for Athanasius Ivanovitch, when her ear was struck by a plaintive mewing. Without thinking, she called, and suddenly there came out from the bushes her favorite cat, meagre and half dead. It was evident she had eaten nothing for several days. Pulcheria Ivanovna continued to call her; but the cat dared not approach, so wild had she become since her flight. The lady resumed her walk, still calling her cat, which followed her with a fearful step to the hedge, and at last, perceiving familiar places, decided to enter the house. Pulcheria Ivanovna quickly ordered milk and meat to be brought her, and enjoyed the voracity of her favorite, who soon ceased to eat with the same appetite. Pulcheria Ivanovna extended her hand to caress her; but the ingrate sprang through the window, and could not be caught.

"It is a warning of my death!" she said.

She was sad all day. In vain did Athanasius Ivanovitch utter his usual jests, and ask why she had suddenly become so pensive.

"What is the matter? Are you sick?"

"No, I am not sick; but I must tell you something. I know I must die this summer—I have had a warning."

The lips of her husband contracted sorrowfully. Nevertheless he wished to conquer the gloomy presentiment which sprang up in her soul, and said, with a smile:

"God knows what you mean, Pulcheria Ivanovna; probably, instead of the decoction you usually take, you've drank some peach-brandy."

"No, I have not drank brandy," said she; and Athanasius felt remorse at having rallied his wife. He looked at her in silence, and a tear moistened his eyelids.

"I pray you," said she to him, "to fulfil my will. When I am dead, bury me in the churchyard; put on me my gray gown—that which has the little brown flowers. Do not put on my satin gown, with the red stripes; the dead need not fine garments; that may be of use to you. It will make you a handsome dressing-gown, to wear when you receive visits."

"God knows what you are talking about, Pulcheria Ivanovna! God knows when death will come; and yet you begin to terrify me with such words."

"I know well that I must die. But do not grieve for me. I am already old; I have lived long enough. You also are old, and we shall soon meet in the other world."

And Athanasius began to sob like a child.

"Do not weep; it is a sin. Do not sin and make God angry by your sadness. I do not regret my death; I regret one thing (she interrupted herself by a sigh), I regret that I do not know to whom to confide you. Who will take care of you when I am dead? You are like a little child; those who serve you should love you."

As she said these words, a pity so tender and profound was painted on her countenance, that no person could have looked at her at this moment without emotion.

"Listen, Iavdoka," said she, addressing the housekeeper, whom she had summoned expressly, "when I am dead, take care of your lord as the apple of your eye, as your own child. See that they prepare for him the dishes he loves; let his linen and clothes be always clean; if visitors come, see that he is properly dressed, and that he does not meet them in an old dressing-gown, for he begins to forget the distinction between fete days and ordinary days. Keep him under your own eyes, Iavdoka, and God will reward you. Do not forget what I am saying to you, Iavdoka; you are already old, you have not much longer to live; do not commit the sin of neglect, for if you did not take good care of him, you will have no more happiness in this world; you will be unhappy, your children will be unhappy, and your whole family will have the blessing of God in nothing."

Poor old woman! she was not thinking then of the solemn moment she was soon to pass through, nor of her own soul, nor of the future life. She was thinking only of her poor companion on the journey of this life, whom she was thus to leave alone, and who were, as orphan. With much order and clearness, she regulated all her affairs, so that Athanasius Ivanovitch might not feel her absence. The conviction that she was about to die soon was so strong, and her soul was so prepared for it, that, in fact, a few days afterward, she took to her bed, and her appetite failed her. Athanasius Ivanovitch was very attentive, and never left her bedside.

"Can you not eat something, Pulcheria Ivanovna?" he repeated incessantly, with sorrowful uneasiness.

But Pulcheria Ivanovna did not reply. At last, one day, after a long illness, Pulcheria Ivanovna raised herself fully, moved her lips, as if she had wished to speak, and exhaled her last sigh.

Athanasius Ivanovitch was overwhelmed. This death seemed so strange that he did not weep. He looked at the body with dim and dull eyes, as if he did not comprehend that it was a corpse. They deposited it on a table, dressed it in the robe which she herself had designated, folded the arms over the breast, and placed between the fingers a little taper. He saw all this done in complete insensibility. A multitude of people filled the court, and many visitors came to the burial. Before the house, long tables were prepared, covered with *koutia* (a diet composed of rice, sugar and raisins, and especially prepared for interments), pies and flasks of brandy. The guests talked, wept, contemplated the deceased, vaunted her good qualities, and looked at Athanasius Ivanovitch. He glared around on the crowd with a stupid air. At last, the corpse was borne away; all formed in a procession, and he among the rest. The sun was bright: the priests wore their gilded chasubles; nurslings cried in the arms of their mothers; the larks sang; little half-dressed children played and ran about on the road. The coffin was placed above the grave, which had been prepared in the cemetery. Then Athanasius Ivanovitch was invited to approach the dead, and embrace her for the last time. He approached, he embraced her, tears rolled down his cheeks, but insensible tears. The coffin was lowered; the priest took a spade and threw upon it the first shovelful of earth; the deacon and his two assistants began to chant the *vechnia pamiat* (eternal memory) in a low and languid tone, which was lost afar beneath the pure and cloudless sky; the sextons took their spades and the earth quickly filled up and covered the grave. At this moment, Athanasius Ivanovitch advanced. Everybody gave place to him, desirous of knowing his intentions. He raised his eyes, cast around him a troubled glance, and said:

"Here, then, you have buried her. Why—"

He stopped, unable to finish his sentence.

But when he had returned to the house, when he saw that her chamber was empty, and that even the arm-chair, in which Pulcheria Ivanovna last sat, had been carried away, he began to sob, bitterly, inconsolably, and tears flowed from his dim eyes like fountains.

Five years after the death of Pulcheria Ivanovna, I found myself by chance in the neighborhood of the domain of Athanasius Ivanovitch, and I went to visit the good old man, at whose house I had passed so many pleasant days and ate so many excellent delicacies. The dwelling seemed to me to be twice as old; the cottages of the villagers were tottering. The fence, which formerly surrounded the court, was entirely destroyed, and I saw with my own eyes the cook take from it posts, while she had but two steps more to take to reach a pile of fagots. I approached the steps; the same dogs, but blind or with broken jaws, began to bark. The old man came to meet me; yes, it was he! I recognized him at once; but he stooped twice as much as formerly. He recognized me also, and accosted me with his habitual smile. I followed him into the house. At the first glance, all seemed unchanged. But I soon remarked everywhere a strange disorder, the visible traces of an absence. In a word, I felt the emotion which seizes us when we enter, for the first time, the habitation of a widower, whom we have always known inseparable from his companion. The want of a good housekeeper was perceptible everywhere. One of the knives which was placed on the table was without a handle. The dishes were not prepared with the same care. I avoided speaking of household matters.

When we had taken our places at the table, a servant came to fasten a napkin under the chin of Athanasius Ivanovitch, and it was well, for without this precaution, he would have soiled his dressing gown. I attempted to amuse him. I related various anecdotes. He listened to me with the same smile; but at times, his look became completely inanimate; it seemed as if he thought of nothing. He often carried the spoon to his nose, instead of his mouth; instead of placing his fork in a piece of veal, he would strike his decanter with it; then the servant would take his hand and guide it. It happened that we had to wait several minutes for the dish that was to succeed. Athanasius Ivanovitch perceived it himself.

"Why," said he, "do they wait so long before giving us something to eat?"

But I saw, through the crevices of the door, that the boy who waited on us was quietly asleep, seated on a bench, and with his head down.

"It was this dish," said Athanasius Ivanovitch, when they offered to us little cakes called *unichkis*; "it was this dish," continued he, and I remarked that his voice began to tremble, and that a tear was about to start from his leaden eye, though he made an effort to suppress it; "it was this dish that the deceased—"

Suddenly he burst into tears; his hand dropped on the plate, and the plate on the ground. But he remained seated, insensible; insensibly, he held his spoon, and his tears, like an inexhaustible fountain, flowed, flowed, flowed, on the napkin which covered his breast.

Athanasius Ivanovitch did not long survive this visit. I have recently learned that he is no more. But the most singular thing about it is, that the particulars of his death gave it some resemblance to that of Pulcheria Ivanovna. One day, Athanasius Ivanovitch was walking in his garden; he was slowly traversing the path, with his accustomed indifference and bitterness, when he suddenly heard some one pronounce behind him, in a very distinct voice:

"Athanasius Ivanovitch!"

He hastily turned; there was no one there. He looked on every side, but saw nothing. The weather was serene, the sun shining brightly. He reflected an instant; his countenance became animated, and he said at last:

"It is Pulcheria who is calling me."

Athanasius Ivanovitch was impressed with the idea that Pulcheria Ivanovna had called him; he submitted to his fate with the docility of a child. He began to grow thin, to cough, to melt away like a taper, and at last expired. His last words were: "Let me be buried beside Pulcheria Ivanovna." His desire was fulfilled. There were fewer visitors at his funeral, but as many peasants and poor people. The family mansion became entirely empty. The speculating intendant, along with the *starosta*, seized all the articles which the housekeeper had not had time to carry off. Very soon the heir arrived, a distant relative, who had the rank of lieutenant in the army, and was a good reformer. He immediately perceived the disorder which reigned in the affairs of the household; he decided to change all this, by introducing the most perfect order. He commenced by purchasing half a dozen fine English sickles, caused a number to be painted on the house of each peasant, and, in short, managed so that at the end of six months his property was sequestrated. The cottages fell into ruins. The peasants became intemperate, and almost all died. The proprietor himself rarely went to the village and made short visits there. He frequents all the fairs of Little Russia, pricing articles sold in large quantities, such as wheat and flax; but buying only such trifles as do not exceed a rouble in value.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

TO A DYING BIRD.

BY R. H. HUDSON.

Calmly, gently, sink to rest,
Dying one.
On the spot thou lovest best.
'Neath the sun:
Where the breezes low are sighing,
Where the forest flowers are dying,
And the autumn leaves are lying,
Thou shalt rest.

I have loved thee well and long,
Minstrel wild;
Lone, dark hours hast thou beguiled
With thy song.
Round thee silver streams are flowing,
Sunny skies above are glowing,
But thy spirit-week is going
Far away.

The bongks on which thou oft hast sung
Shall o'er thee wave;
And night's gentle tears be flung
On thy grave.
Where the breezes low are sighing,
Where the forest flowers are dying,
And the autumn leaves are lying,
Rest in peace.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

MY TEXAS TOUR.

BY GEORGE G. GAITHER.

You want my opinion of Texas? I have not seen enough of the State to justify an opinion; but I can tell you what have been my feelings, till now: I am disgusted with myself for having come to this savage land! We hear of the Camanches, Apaches, Wacos and Navajos, as being barbarians, when you may find, in any town of the *Lone Star State*, men just as worthy of the term.

Men who have resided here for years, have forgotten what civilization is, and they may be sincere when they speak of society in Texas; but the majority are outlaws, or poor, ignorant individuals, who do not know what it is to live comfortably.

I never saw prairies till I travelled from the Gulf to San Antonio; and if all prairies are like that which I traversed in that journey, I never wish to cross another! I cannot imagine a desolate country more uninviting than that dreary waste.

They say railroads would be the making of Texas; but what does such a sparse population want with railroads? There is not wealth enough in the country to construct them; and northern capitalists are not going to waste their money in ventures that will not pay. Of what value is eleven leagues of land, without wood or water? such is most of the land west of the Trinity.

When the Yankees began to inhabit San Antonio, all the respectable Mexicans commenced leaving; the few that now dwell there, were too poor to leave, and they have earned what little they possess, since the incorporation of Texas into the North American Confederacy. Look at them, and tell me if they can be called rational beings? visit their *jacales*, and say if you do not prefer a hammock, under a shed, to a couch in one of their filthy huts? What untidy beings the females are! they lounge all day, on a *tule* mat, or raw hide, *en chemise*, lunting *piojos* in their dirty hair; and they pass their evenings smoking cigarretos and babbling at the door. *Officionados* tell of the time when the saintly city contained a population of 40,000, living on the bountiful productions of the fertile soil, and rejoiced in the genial climate of a delightful country, blessed by the Creator above all other spots on this earth; now you behold barren wastes, parched by a burning sun, intensely ventilated by boreal blasts, and infested by winged and creeping insects, until nothing green can flourish for a day.

Below the city, at short intervals, on both sides of the river, are mission ruins, where the good Castilian or Andalusian *padres*, must have led a glorious life in the midst of their neophytes. The belfries of these old churches still tower above the parched plains, in sad, saintly, solitary grandeur, reminding one of Saint Peter's dome, as seen from Ostia, over the surrount. San Antonio, San Jose, San Juan, the goodly patrons of this *cofradia*, are certainly patronizing, at present, other portions of God's earth. I have heard Mexico called a God forsaken land; and this must be, too.

The Christian edifices, *ad majorem Dei gloriam*, have been contaminated by the sacrilegious touch of heretical Anglo-American Goths and Vandals, and their saints have forsaken them, like the mother bird that abandons her nest, disturbed by the hands of man.

Joseph and Mary, watching the ecclesiastic piles, have not been respected by the *Gueros*; nor the other saints, looking down, from above the key stone. They served as targets to the Protestant soldiery, as the loss of an arm or nose can plainly show. Those holy structures, *Domino optimo maximo, sub invocatione* of any saint or saintess, now answer for camps and stables to nomade Americans, seeking a new home for their restless bodies and discontented spirits. These ancient monks, long dead and gone, with not a common stone nor graven tablet to indicate the spot where they repose, must have dwelt under their own vine and fig-tree; yet we see no traces of these, either. The plague of Egypt must have come upon the land, in the form of ants and ticals, and subsequently turned to sand.

Some of the California missions exhibit signs of civilization, not found in other parts of the Mexican dominions. They have grapes and figs and pears, as tempting to the sight and taste as the fruits of any country; we see nothing of this here, in Texas and New Mexico. The elpaso grape is as delicious as that grown at Los Angelos, in California; and the mustang grape, of Texas, makes as good wine as the catawba.

They tell strange stories of the rich men in the Texas towns. I had some business with the personage of Victoria, on the Wauloop, and was glad to rest a day from the fatigues of staging. I inquired of a tavern lounger if he knew Mr. L., the *Don Dinero* of the pueblo. Everybody knows old Don Whann! he is the oldest inhabitant of the place, owns all the corner lots, and half the suburbs. "How did he get rich?" I asked. A renegade to his country, he came among the Mexicans, and was as one of them, or American, just as it suited his convenience. He was clever enough to obtain large grants of land, and was smart in trading. Too base to join the army, he followed, like a jackal, in its track, and fattened on the spoils he stole. The Mexicans got hold of some paper money from their Texan prisoners. They did not understand the denomination, and did not know the value of it. Don Whann bought it and realized a splendid profit. At the close of the war, he put in his claim for spoliation, and it was confirmed. That's the way he got rich! Now he hates his country, and will scarcely speak to one of us. He has his house and garden, his cotton and his sugar lands, coach and horses, for his daughters. His children are educated abroad, and he spends no money in the State. Such was the history they gave me of Mr. L.

Another instance of a similar success, is found in San Antonio: Don Pancho is the nabob of the place. His store-house is the best in the town, and his suburban villa would grace the vicinage of any city. He has short, stiff, grizzly hair, growing low on his forehead; a keen black eye in a face of fifty; an abrupt voice and rustic manner, very unlike the suavity of his countrymen, the French. The much respected Don was French consul, when Coahuila and Tejas were joint provinces, under Mexican rule. Tradition says he sold pecans to the *senoritas*, when Saint Antony had not yet heard of the northern barbarians. We next find him wandering as a *mozo* to the *arrieros* of El Paso, Santa Fe and Chihuahua. He soon learned the importance of larger trade, and extended his commercial operations. His industry, punctuality, and sagacity, attract the attention of one of his trading compatriots, through whose influence the Gallic *gamin* becomes *Don Francisco, Consul Frances*, in the prospering place of San Antonio. When the town was taken by General Wool, the few French inhabitants deposited their valuables under the protection of the French tricolor, waving over Don Pancho's magazine. It is believed he reaped a rich reward for his valuable services in that important transaction. The heiress of the town did him the honor to become his consort. Behold his utmost hopes accomplished! Going down the river, on the Mission road, a few minutes walk from the Plaza, you see a charming dwelling, embowered in a lovely garden, extending its gravel walks, by a gentle meandering descent, to the limpid, gurgling waters of the Rio de San Antonio, one of the most beautiful streams of western Texas. At sunset, you may hear the tones of a piano, and a gentle voice, warbling some air of Mozart or Auber, which strikes enchantingly on your sympathetic ear, reminding you of some fair female in the white settlements. It is the voice of Madame, or her daughter, according with the full tones of Erard's best.

From the bottom of the garden, a fairy bridge crosses to a *kiosk* on an islet in the river, the banks of which are terraced to the water's edge. I will not describe the filthy huts, containing squalid misery, around the mansion of this moneyed lord.

I was aroused at the untimely hour of two, in Victoria, to continue my journey.

"Room for another?" I asked, on opening the stage door.

A baby's squall and a shrill female voice answered plainly, *no!* However, I squeezed in among the opposing passengers, and tried to make myself welcome by soft words and sundry apologies for the necessary intrusion. What a potent effect kind tones will have upon an audience!

Among the passengers was an ex-M. C. from Maine, and a stage contractor from Georgia, both travelling men and excessive talkers; they kept up an entertaining conversation till daylight. I shall never forget the history of a duel, told by Mr. S. the gentleman from Maine. I shall not narrate it with all the harrowing particularities of detail which he used; but I will try and give the substance. Mr. S. began thus:

"Did you ever know Dr. Lane, of St. Louis, and are you acquainted with the circumstances of his death? Before his last session, he received a power of attorney, from some man in St. Louis, to sell a coal mine. The sale was made in Philadelphia, and the owner denied the Dr.'s power to make it. This excited the Dr., a man of high honor, and he tried to find the authorizing act. It must have been left in his office, at St. Louis! He hurried home, after the adjournment, and went immediately to his office. Not returning to dinner, his wife went after him. He told her what he was hunting for, and she offered to assist him.

"After searching every probable nook in the room, he stooped over a basket of waste paper. He sprang up suddenly, and said to his wife: 'Did you hear that pistol near the window?' She said 'no.' I heard it as distinctly as if it were close by my ear.'

"A few minutes after, they found the document in a law book, the Dr. remembered to have been consulting, just before he left home. He retired early that night, with a request that he should not be disturbed till ten next morning. At that hour, his wife went to wake him; she found him stiff and cold! The report he heard at the window must have been the rupture of an artery in his brain. Dr. Lane was an elegant gentleman and a very remarkable man. He told me of the last duel, in which he took a part:

"There was a young lawyer from the North, who settled in St. Louis. He was the pride and hope of his sisters and widowed mother. There was then, at the St. Louis bar, a rude ruffian, calling himself a lawyer, who happened to be the opposing counsel, in a case with our young Yankee. The young man gained the case, to the great vexation of his adversary. The inflamed bravado insulted him. Junius sought the advice of Dr. Lane.

"'My good fellow,' said the Dr., 'such is the state of this community, I am sorry to say it, that you will have to challenge Braggart, or quit the bar. I cannot be your second, but I will be your surgeon on the field. I will send for a gentleman, who will bear your cartel.'

"Junius instantly wrote a challenge, which was accepted, for pistols, at ten steps, at noon the next day, on Bloody Island, in the river, fronting the city. Braggart spoke of it so openly, it was soon known through the city. They were already on the ground when Braggart arrived, followed by a crowd. Hundreds were standing on the shore, to see the combat. Dr. L. said to his young friend: "Now, as soon as Braggart ascends the bank, you must bow to him, with a smile.' It was done.

"The ground was measured, the pistols loaded, and the parties had taken their positions. Junius handed the Dr. a letter, saying, 'send this to my mother, if I fall,' and then announced that he was ready. The word was given, and the report of both pistols was heard simultaneously. Braggart bounded into the air, and fell like a log; Junius stood a second, and simply said, 'lay me on the ground, I am mortally wounded.' He expired in a few minutes. His wound was in the groin; Braggart was shot through the heart. Dr. Lane had fought several duels, and had witnessed many; but that was the last he ever saw."

The city of San Antonio is said to contain 10,000 inhabitants. The streets are narrow, crooked, unpaved, with exiguous side walks. The houses are built of sticks and mud, adobes, concrete and tufa, mostly one story, and never more than two. The river is the most tortuous stream I ever saw; you can scarcely go in any direction, through town, without crossing it. It is formed of several springs, four miles from the city. In the rear of the houses on the river, are canvass bath houses, a great luxury to the owners, at all seasons of the year, the water coming from springs so near, it feels warm in winter and cool in summer. The population is a medley of many nations. The fences are pickets of mezquite posts, fastened together at the top with raw hide thongs. Brush forms some fences. Near the river source are extensive tufa quarries, that might furnish stone enough to enclose any quantity of land, for cultivation. The old canals, for irrigation, still exist, and with little labor, might be repaired, so that the whole country, in the vicinity, might be cultivated and made to blossom as the rose. Snow is never seen in San Antonio, though the north winds in winter are very cold.

The road to Austin, eighty miles, is one of the best natural ways I ever travelled. It runs along the base of wooded hills, with almost boundless prairies, speckled with live oak groves, stretching in the dim distance below. These occasional clusters of timber, with smooth intervening lawns, look so artificial, that John Bull is strongly reminded of his native country. All the streams of Texas take their origin from immense springs, bursting out at the foot of the hills.

Passing through the German town of New Braunfels, I had the satisfaction of seeing Gov. Ladislaus Uyhazi, the illustrious Hungarian, who founded a colony in Iowa. He is now living in Olmos creek, near San Anton.

The village of San Marios, is the other settlement we pass, on the road to Austin.

The more perfect the nature, the more weak, the more wrong, the more absurd, may be the something in a character; to explain the paradox—if a mind is delicate and susceptible, false impressions in education will have a bad effect in proportion to that susceptibility, and may produce evil an insensible nature might avoid.—*Greville.*

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[Written for The Flag of our Union]

THE FADED ROSE.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Then withered is that blooming rose,
O, give it back to me;
For it a sad memento is
Of life, and love, and thee;
And near my heart it shall repose,
Like solace in an urn;
While I, my sad, despairing eyes
Unto its leaves shall turn.

I know that thou wilt prize it not,
When all its bloom is o'er;
And though its scent may still remain,
Thou'lt value it no more;
But I shall love such withered leaf,
Because it once was thine;
Because its fate was sad and brief,
As this dark life of mine.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE KING'S PLEDGE.

A STORY OF ANCIENT BRITAIN.

BY ELIZABETH B. FRAZER.

HAROLD the Dauntless, the last of the Saxon kings of England, clad in his heavy suit of mail, was seated at the door of his snow white tent, while, before him, was standing the Earl of Leicester, a young man, as yet scarcely eighteen years of age. It was autumn of the year 1066, and the king, with an army of fifty thousand men, was encamped near York, expecting to give battle the next morning to the numerous legions of the Norwegian invaders, under Hardrada, a Scandinavian monarch, and Tosti, one of Harold's own brothers (but always a bitter enemy), who had been marching forward with the intention of conquering the whole country.

It was night, far into the night of the 24th of September, and Harold had donned his heavy armor, because he wished to be in readiness at dawn for conflict, and he had much to do before that time. He had summoned the Earl of Leicester before him, having a service of importance for him to perform. The earl had answered the summons, and stood before the king.

"Henry," commenced the monarch, addressing the earl, and motioning him to be seated, "I have sent for you, because I have a mission on the morrow for you to perform, upon the success of which depends much of your future fortune."

"I am at my king's command," said the earl, "ready and willing to do, as well as lies within my power, whatever service he may entrust."

"And more particularly, I suspect, the one which I am to name," returned the monarch. "'Tis well! Though you have but recently assumed the title left to you by your brave father's death—though as yet but a youth, well do I know you! your prowess in the tournament—your skill with the sword and spear! But you have never fought in battle—you have never faced real danger."

"But you cannot doubt my disregard of danger, where honor calls me to face it," hesitatingly answered the youth.

"No," said Harold. "No! your king would wrong the memory of your brave father, and his dear friend, did he suspect you capable of avoiding through fear, a danger lying before you."

"Yet, I have never been in conflict, you would say!—have never done anything to gain a name!—have done nothing to make me worthy of my dead father's place! I know this is true. But it shall not long be so! Upon the morrow, a different tale—"

"I know what you would say, and you have read my thoughts aright," interrupted the king. "But the service—the service I wish you to perform—it will be a difficult one, one which will not allow you to bring back your sword unused."

"And the nature of this service—if it be that with which honor will not clash—"

"Do not fear," the king answered. "Harold will not counsel or persuade you to do aught dishonorable! But your queen's sister—Elgrida—"

"Elgrida! What of her? The queen's sister? Is she in danger? Is she not safe within the camp?"

"No!"

"Where, then, is she?"

"In the Norwegian camp."

"Is it possible! How came she there?"

"Be calm," said the king, "and I'll tell you."

"I am calm," the earl answered. "Go on, your highness."

"Elgrida is, I expect, in that portion of the camp where my brother commands. Scarcely two hours since, as I have but just been informed, a Norwegian detachment fell suddenly upon our left flank, and driving before them the advanced pickets, succeeded in surrounding the tent wherein were the Lady Elgrida and her brother, the former of whom they made their captive."

"Was no attempt made to rescue her?"

"There was, but without effect. Our troops immediately rallied, and being joined by more, drove the Norwegians from the ground, and pursued them nearly to their own encampment. The Lady Elgrida being, however, with their advanced portion, they were unable to retake her."

"But she must be rescued!"

"And I have made a vow she shall," said the king. "I am at a loss to find out the reason why my recreant brother wished her capture; for that Tosti put this plan afoot, and prompted her seizure, I feel sure!"

"She must be recovered," said the earl, "and at whatever cost!"

"She must, Earl Henry," returned Harold, "and in the morrow's conflict; for, with early dawn I am determined to give the Norwegians battle. In our attack upon the morrow I wish you to let your energies be directed towards the recovery of Elgrida! If you succeed, there is no favor you can ask of Harold that he will refuse!"

"There needs not this incentive, my liege, to spur me on," the earl replied: "I will leave no means untried to free her!"

"I feel sure of that," said the king, "for I am not blind to the love—"

"Love!" interrupted Earl Henry, blushing.

"Yes, love!" reiterated the monarch. "You love the Lady Elgrida!"

"Ay, my liege, I do!"

"And you have confessed it to her?"

"Yes," the earl responded, "and we are betrothed."

"Indeed!" uttered the king. "I did not think you had gone so far! You would marry?"

"We would; but feared we might not gain your assent."

"You should, at least, wait a while, until, by some gallant deed, you have gained a name! The sister of a queen of Britain! But I will not say you nay, if your—"

"Thanks to your majesty. If I but snatch her from your unworthy brother, I will tell her of your kindness."

"As for me I do not fear the issue of the strife—our men are strong and skilful; and when I have punished this bold Norwegian invader, and the insolent Tosti, and driven them from our shores, we may look for peace awhile, unless the Duke of Normandy may require us to show *him* our strength and prowess!"

It was an hour subsequently to the seizure of the queen's sister,—and the Norwegian detachment had some time since returned to camp.

The Lady Elgrida was seated in one of the lower rooms of a large stone structure, where Tosti, one of the leaders of the invading army, held his quarters. She was musing over some of the strange occurrences of the last hour, and occasionally asking some question of the attend ant in waiting.

On being so suddenly and violently seized by her savage enemies, she had came near fainting; and, afterwards, on being a witness to the fierce and deadly struggle of her captors with her countrymen, she had fallen into a swoon, in which state she had been conveyed to Tosti's quarters. She had now been restored to consciousness but a few minutes, through the efforts of the attendant in whose care she was placed. At length a heavy step reached her ears; a door opened, and the brother of King Harold presented himself. Bidding the attendant withdraw, he approached the Lady Elgrida, who arose from her seat.

"The Lady Elgrida may again be seated," said Tosti, as upon his stern and sinister countenance gleamed an expression of fiendlike joy. "I shall tarry but a few minutes!"

"Who are you!" she replied, "and for what have you now come?"

"I am the brother of the usurper, Harold—he, who, at present, bears the title of King of Britain," said Tosti, gazing fully into the features of his captive, which, though pale as monumental marble, were still supremely beautiful, "but ere long, mayhap, I may be king instead of him!"

"Not while he lives!" the Lady Elgrida responded. "So, then, you are the renegade Tosti," she continued,—"the recreant brother of my sovereign?"

"Bold words, these, for one like you to speak, Elgrida! I am his brother! but it ill becomes my captive so to express herself!"

"I am your captive," said Elgrida, "and the words I utter—"

"Should be weighed ere spoken!"

"Not so," she answered, her eyes firmly fixed upon him, "for I am no slave! I have been rudely seized, borne from my friends, and brought hither, but for what *purpose* I have yet to learn!"

"You shall know," said Tosti, "I will tell you. I came here, to inform you of the reason of your capture! A deserter from your ranks to-day, informed me, that not only yourself, Elgrida, but your sister, Harold's queen, was accompanying, for a time, the large pavilion upon the border of your left camp. I sent a strong force, that they might make a sudden and fierce attack, and bear both away, ere they could be prevented. But the desperate courage of your troops rendered part of my plan abortive—the queen escaped."

"Your messenger did not tell you truth," said Elgrida; "the queen has never been within our camp."

"Do you speak true?"

"Why speak falsely?" was the answer. "Ay, I do! But for what wished you our seizure?"

"I looked for a goodly ransom, ere either would be allowed to return."

"But you are in part foiled," Elgrida said, "and I am glad of that!"

"You need not be glad."

"Why?" she asked. "I know I shall remain a captive, until a heavy ransom is paid, or you are compelled to yield me up. But the queen—she is not in your power—I am glad of that."

"You need not be," Tosti repeated, "for until the gold, which would ransom two queens of Britain, is paid for you, you remain within my power!"

"Do not be too sure, base traitor to your country!" Elgrida answered, with flashing eyes. "The good trenchant blade of some brave and stalwart knight may ransom me, instead of gold—perhaps, at a fearful cost to you."

"You talk bravely," Tosti said; "as ill befits one as helpless as you now are. But, go on. I shall not heed your words, unless they are kind once—then indeed will I return them with others as kind. Another sun shall not set, ere you will see how poor are your hopes in Harold!"

"The battle is not always to the strong, degenerate man," was Elgrida's answer. "My hopes of freedom are large. I shall yet be free! The brave and loyal hearts of Britain are not to be trodden down and crushed by such as you, and those you lead!"

"Rail on, fair maiden," returned Tosti, with a sneer and a smile. "You bear yourself right queenly, as one should, who soon will be my queen—the queen of Britain."

"Your queen!—the queen of Britain!"

"Ay, lady, so I spoke; for I have destined you to fill that place,—and trust that you will love me for choosing you! Yes, and know, the joy of seeing you my helpless thrall, my captive, is greater than to be master of a kingdom! In the attack to night, 'twas you—you, that most I coveted! You, whom I love—whom I long have loved, whom I mean shall be my queen—my wife, when seated on the throne of Britain!"

"You! base, unmanly being—apostate—villain!" were the words of Elgrida, "you love me—long have loved me! I ne'er laid eyes on you, until within the hour!"

"That may be, fair maiden," said her captor, "but I have seen you often—often (tis true unknown to you), and long have coveted you, and the beauty which is yours."

"But never can, nor ever will, possess me!"

"Ay, as sure as, ere many days, I will be Britain's king."

"Without my will!"

"With it, or without it!"

"No, I tell you no," said Elgrida, "you ne'er can be my king, nor yet my husband! Neither while, at least, there beats one faithful, loyal heart for Harold and his kin."

"Short time will show," was Tosti's answer; "and you will do well to prepare your mind for what *must* take place! The time we have seen and known each other is short; but we shall have time hereafter to better know ourselves,—and, you may be sure, I can be a kind lover, or a bitter enemy! The hour is late, and so now I take my leave."

"You cannot take anything I would more freely give," was Elgrida's reply.

"Presumptuous being!" said the Lady Elgrida, after having been a few minutes left to her own thoughts, giving utterance to her reveries aloud. "And does this apostate—this renegade—this ruthless man, think to succeed in his ambitious projects? No! he cannot! The troops of King Harold are strong, hardy, skilful. They will not be beaten! They are the most warlike—the most loyal troops of the land; and are eager for the conflict, to prove the prowess of their arms! They cannot be beaten! and yet, *should* they be overcome by Tosti, and the fierce legions of his colleague, Hardrada, should they —but no, they will not yield while King Harold lives, or any of those warlike hearts, who, under him, lead them on! But—but if the worst *should* befall them, may I not fear Tosti will carry out those threats he but now boldly spoke of? No, no, I will not fear! I am the betrothed of Henry, Earl of Leicester. I will never—never be the wife of Tosti—or wife of any one but Henry! I will not prove recreant to my vows!—I will be ever true, faithful to him, or to his memory, should he fall in the 'doubtful shock of arms' so come. Away with false and childish fears! What though a captive to a barbarous enemy, I will hope for the best; and if the worst comes, strive to avoid it."

And thus saying, Elgrida, stepping forward, fastened the door of the little room wherein she was, and sought the low couch, where she was to pass the night.

The morning of the 25th of September, 1066, dawned clear and calm and bright, and the golden rays of the ascending sun, fell on myriads of spears and breastplates, on battle-axes and swords and bright steel armor, and on two mighty armies, that, with their standards waving high, were soon to meet "in the fierce and fiery storm of war."

A grand—an awe-inspiring sight it was, to behold these two mighty armies, attired in all the gorgeous paraphernalia of war, approaching each other, eager to meet in a desperate struggle for a nation. Harold, who had made every preparation for conflict ere the break of day, arranged his serried lines of veterans in order of battle, and having briefly addressed them, gave the orders for them to move forward.

And while they marched onward, inspired with the thought that they were to contend against their enemy for the salvation of their nation, the Norwegians moved towards them, elated with as high a courage, perhaps, in their hopes of achieving the conquest of a country.

The two opposing armies at length met, and fierce indeed was the encounter between the veterans of Harold and the numerous legions of Hardrada. Harold commanded the right wing, opposed to Hardrada's left, and his two gallant brothers led on the centre and left. In the centre, the Earl of Leicester led on his thousand horsemen, his object being, if possible, to pierce through the fierce battalions of Tosti, and gain his camp.

From morn until midday, the conflict raged with unceasing fury, the tide of battle favoring one side and then the other; although the Norwegians lost most men.

Their wings held out firmly, in spite of all the efforts of Harold's veterans to push them back. But, a little after noon, their centre showed evident signs of soon giving way, so sorely were they pressed; and the Earl of Leicester, having gained some advantage over the battalion under the immediate command of Tosti, rushed forward, with uplifted battle-axe, to engage the traitor. Tosti, perceiving him, couched his lance, and putting spurs to his charger, galloped forward to meet him.

Fast as they met, the Earl of Leicester reined his horse to one side, and the spear of Tosti was thrown wide of its intended mark, he, himself, being borne past his foe, ere he could check his steed's career. But, as he passed, the earl stood high in his stirrups, and giving his battle-axe a swing over his head, brought it down heavily upon the helmet of his enemy. Such strength was put in the blow, that it cut open the steel cap of Tosti, and inflicted a severe if not fatal wound upon his head, causing him to fall stunned and bleeding to the ground.

The earl, however, did not pause, but rode forward to where his men were steadily driving their foe, over heaps of their slain that lay before them. Their enemy at length broke and fled, and the earl, with his men, rode on for the recent quarters of Tosti, hoping to there find the Lady Elgrida. They soon reached the stone building where she was imprisoned, and rushed impetuously through the main entrance, overthrowing all who were stationed within, and opposed their progress, without scarcely a moment's delay.

The earl then passed through a number of the rooms, and soon found the object of his search. Elgrida, on perceiving her noble lover, though his steel clad suit was covered with blood and dust, rushed to him, and falling upon his breast, expressed the joy she felt at his presence, unscathed so far in the battle's fiery ordeal; and said she could never doubt the deep love he bore her, since the dangers he had passed through to reach and rescue her.

"I rejoice, dear Elgrida, that I have been able to reach and save you, though the path to you was marked with blood; for, now you are free, and can return with me to our friends,—and, if you do not deny my prayer, I will claim the fulfilment of the promise the king has made me."

"The king?—what promise?"

"You shall know anon," said the earl; "but we will go now, or we may have the enemy, more powerful than we wish, upon us."

The earl, and the fair lady he loved, soon quitted the building, and a steed being procured for the latter, she mounted. They then started off, with the earl's men, for their own camp. In the meantime, the shouts and din of the battle had continued, mingled with the groans of the dying and the wounded. But the Norwegians were now retreating on all sides, hotly pursued by the fierce Britains.

As the earl and his men were riding back in the direction of their camp, accompanied by Elgrida, they saw an immense host of the Norwegians, more than ten times their own numbers, coming straight towards them.

Perceiving that they would be able to quite annihilate his small force, should he confront them, and perhaps having some fears for the safety of Elgrida, the earl halted his men, to hastily consider some means of eluding them.

"They have seen us," said the earl. "They are coming forward. I will retreat upon our left wing, where there is a large force, that have not gone in pursuit of the retreating enemy. They will follow, and I will manage to bring them between two fires."

Again the earl and his men rode onward, but it was in another direction; and soon coming in contact with large bodies of Harold's troops, he sought one of their leaders, with whom, after speaking a few hasty words, he left Elgrida. Not longer than a few minutes did he tarry, ere with another, and a stronger force of cavalry, he rode off.

The Norwegians had still pursued, hoping to overtake the earl's command. But, at length, fearing to fall in with a more powerful enemy, they halted, with a view of returning back to their camp, as they knew their friends were retreating on all sides. But they were too late! Through the admirable management of Earl Henry, who had spoken to the leaders of the troops he had recently met, ere they were aware of it, they were almost surrounded, the earl himself, impetuously attacking them from the south, while others bore down upon them from the north and west. The result was not long doubtful, although the Norwegians fought with the courage of desperation. They were soon forced to yield, and fled precipitately towards their shipping, where others of their countrymen had recently preceded them, pushed on by the hot and furious troops of King Harold. But they were not allowed to escape without a loss of more than two thirds of their numbers.

Before night's sable mantle had shut out the scenes of day, the conflict was over; King Harold had gained a glorious victory, and a small and shattered remnant of the mighty army of the Norwegians had gained refuge on board their shipping,—the battle ground for miles around being piled in heaps with their dead and dying.

The next day, Harold, who had been conveyed to York severely wounded, sent for the Earl of Leicester to congratulate him upon the complete success which he had won; he had formed, whereby thousands of the Norwegians had fallen; and, also, to rejoice with him, at the success attending his efforts to rescue the lovely Lady Elgrida.

The earl immediately set out, accompanied by his betrothed; and, ere long, both were ushered into the king's presence.

The king did the earl the honor to state to him, before his assembled nobles and great generals, that through his timely manœuvre he had been the means of so far annihilating the invaders, as to render it improbable they would ever again land upon their shores, at least for years to come.

The recreant Tosti, who had so fondly supposed he would soon become King of Britain, and who had coveted the betrothed of Earl Henry, never recovered from the effects of that warrior's blow, but died soon afterwards.

The king, who had not forgotten the pledge he made the earl, stated that it was his desire that he and the lady Elgrida should be united the third day following; and after some few words, whispered by the earl to Elgrida, she acceded to this request.

The ceremony was accordingly performed upon the third day, before all the noblemen and statesmen of the realm, and in presence of the king, who was still so far from being recovered, as to be obliged to remain in a sitting posture upon his couch.

Scarcely, however, was the benediction over, and Harold was about to express his hopes that a period of permanent peace and happiness would follow throughout the kingdom, when a messenger, unashered, and in breathless haste, rushed into his presence, with the astounding intelligence that William, Duke of Normandy, had landed at Pevensey, and was marching forward to claim the crown.

With his eyes instantly assuming the fiery aspect of war, although wounded as he was, Harold leaped from his couch, bade his attendants bring him his armor, and gave orders to his nobles to immediately prepare to meet this new invader. All in an instant was confusion, amidst which the earl and his blushing bride departed—the former, to serve his king, to leave a "bride upon the floor," for the "flinty and steel couch of war."

Our story is upon the eve of conclusion. We need not dwell upon future events. They belong to history.

The dauntless King Harold, with his two gallant brothers, fell amidst heaps of their own slain upon the sanguinary battle field of Hastings, and a short time subsequently, the Duke of Normandy, under the title of William the Conqueror, became the King of Britain. The Earl of Leicester, who survived that disastrous defeat, with his beautiful wife, retired into Scotland, where they for many years lived in peace and happiness.

Jester's Picnic.

Swarts was a drunkard. He was once engaged to ornament the ceiling of a public building and was to be paid so much a day for his work; but he was so fond of tippling that his employers were obliged to hire another man to watch the tipsy painter. Finding that he could not go to the tavern as often as he wished, he resolved upon practising a piece of deception. He stuffed a pair of stockings similar to those he was in the habit of wearing, and hung them down from his staging whenever he left his work. The watchman called in two or three times a day, but seeing a pair of legs hanging down suspected nothing, and reported to his employers that Swarts had reformed! The roguish painter thus contrived to absent himself for whole days.

A gentleman, on a visit to Washington, one day very coolly opened the door of the Senate Chamber, and was about to pass in, when the door-keeper asked,—"Are you a privileged member?"

"What do you mean by that?" asked the stranger.

The reply was, "A governor, an ex-member of Congress, or a foreign minister."

The stranger replied that he was a minister.

"From what court or country, if you please?" asked the official.

Very gravely pointing up, the stranger replied. "From heaven, sir!"

To this the door keeper waggishly remarked: "This government at present holds no intercourse with that foreign power."

A Spaniard sent his son to the University of Salamanca, and told him to study economy, and to eat beef rather than poultry. On arriving, the young gentleman asked the price of cows.—"About 20 dollars." "And patridges." "Twenty-five cents." "I must live on patridges," said he, "they are decidedly the cheaper of the two."

A gentleman playing cards at Baden Baden was much annoyed by an inquisitive stranger, who stood beside him and pried into his hand.—At last he took a pinch of snuff and administered it to his tormentor, immediately saying, "I beg your pardon, but you were so near me, sir, I mistook your nose for my own."

"For goodness sake, Tom, pay me those dollars you owe me."

"By easy, Ned, I'll pay you next week in some shape."

"Let the shape be as like my two dollars as possible, will you?"

"A posthumous work?" said a little urchin to his father the other day, as he looked at the title page of the "Slave of the Lamp." "What is a posthumous work?"

"Only, sonny, it's a work that an author publishes after he is dead."

A rich Englishman on dying left legacies to all his servants, except the steward, but he was remembered in his will as follows:—"I leave nothing to my steward because he has been in my service twenty years." Of course the fellow had feathered his nest.

The Count de Grammont was dining one day very poorly at Charles II's. table, and seeing the steward hand the dishes to his majesty, kneeling, according to custom, said: "Sire, your steward is asking your pardon for the meagre fare he sets before you."

Every one knows that Sheridan was constantly beset by duns. A gentleman once quoting, in his hearing, the trite maxim:—"He who pays his debts enriches himself," exclaimed:—"Don't believe it, my dear. It's a rascally story, circulated by one's creditors."

The Count de Marsan was one day eating a dish he did not either relish or know by name. "What's this?" he asked the landlord. "Whipped cream, my lord." "It deserves to be whipped, it is so bad," was the reply.

Fontenelle said there were three things he always loved and never understood—painting, music and the fair.

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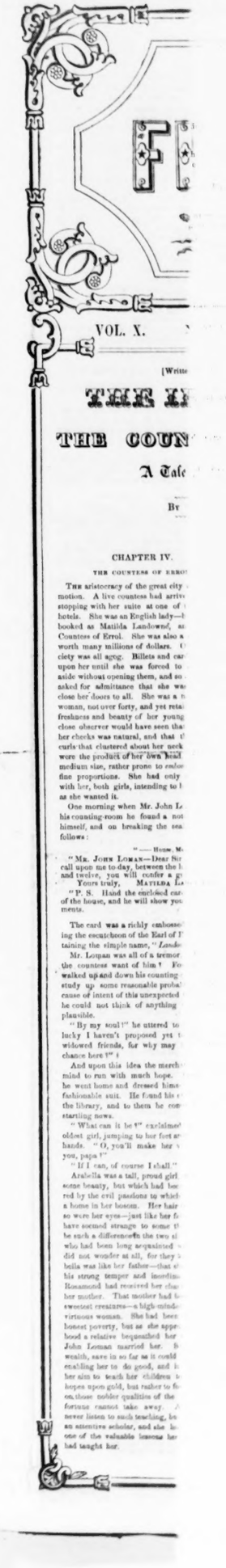
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